

REPORT TO	ON
CABINET	16 October 2019



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation	Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal	Director of Planning and Property

Is this report a KEY DECISION (i.e. more than £100,000 or impacting on more than 2 Borough wards?)	Yes
Is this report on the Statutory Cabinet Forward Plan ?	Yes
Is the request outside the policy and budgetary framework and therefore subject to confirmation at full Council?	No
Is this report confidential?	No

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present to members the Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Paper November 2019 for approval alongside details of the consultation methods and programme. The Issues and Options Consultation paper has been endorsed by the Central Lancashire Joint Advisory Committee and therefore is a final version.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. To approve the Central Lancashire Issues and Options Paper in Appendix One as the first stage in the preparation of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan, in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012
3. To accept and approve the document as drafted recognising that to make any changes at this stage would delay the subsequent approval of the final version as the same version must be approved by all three councils.
4. To approve the proposed methods of consultation including the online portal Citizenspace, and the programme for drop-in events and elected member learning sessions.
5. To approve the key timetable for the consultation commencing on Monday 18th November 2019 at 12.01am and closing at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020.
6. To agree to the commencement of the consultation upon the approval by all three

Central Lancashire councils (subject to any call-in period).

7. To delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal, to undertake any minor text, layout and formatting changes as necessary.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

8. The preparation of a new Local (Development) Plan is now required across Central Lancashire as the existing Core Strategy adopted in 2012, is now more than five years out of date. This Issues and Options consultation is the first stage towards the preparation of a new Local Plan, which considers the challenges and opportunities arising from the evidence collected to inform the new Local Plan, whilst also taking account of wider national policy objectives, priorities and strategy.
9. This new Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with The Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the first stage is referred to as Regulation 18 under which, we will be preparing the Issues and Options Document, and the next planned consultation which will be the Preferred Options, expected in late 2020/21.
10. There is a strategic rationale for the three councils of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble working collaboratively to produce a single Local Plan, as a single housing market area, and functional economic market area with evidence to support high levels of spatial self-containment.
11. There are efficiencies to be gained to be working collectively as plan-making is resource intensive and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have provided funding to Central Lancashire to work together in plan preparation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

12. The three Councils of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble are working collaboratively to produce a single Local Plan and we are now preparing to move into the first consultation stage, known as Issues and Options.
13. A consultation paper has been prepared by officers in the Central Lancashire Local Plan team, with support and contributions from the three “home” policy teams.
14. The basis of the Issues and Options consultation paper are key issues arising from the evidence base and also review of the existing plans and policies. It asks a series of key questions from stakeholders, partners and residents and will inform the new plan policies.
15. The consultation document has been produced in consultation with key elected members across the three Central Lancashire Authorities and endorsed by the JAC and therefore is a final version. To change this document would add lengthy delays to the process.
16. Issues and Options is a key step in plan making as it provides an opportunity for local stakeholders, residents, members, public bodies etc. to engage and shape how the three areas will grow and evolve in the next 15 years.

17. The proposed timetable for the Issues and Options consultation is 12.01am on Monday 18 November 2019 to 11.59pm on Friday 14 February 2020. (12 weeks and 4 days).

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

18. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	x

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
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BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

19. The South Ribble Local Plan currently comprises of two main documents – The Joint Central Lancashire Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2012, and the South Ribble Local Plan, which was adopted in 2015. The Core Strategy contains the wider, strategic policies for the area, whilst the Local Plan contains the area specific policies.

20. The Government introduced the requirement to review the Local Plan every 5 years in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The new Local Plan will be in the form of one document, containing both the strategic and local policies, and will cover all three areas.

21. The Issues and Options is the first stage of consultation in the review process.

PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

22. This is a single Issues and Options Consultation Paper which covers the three geographical areas of Preston, Chorley and South Ribble. The report and associated documents include:

- Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation – November 2019
- Appendix 1 Summary of Questions for the Issues and Options Consultation Survey
- Annex 1 – Site Suggestions proposed by Chorley Council
- Annex 2 – Chorley Council Elected Members Comments on Site Suggestions
- Annex 3 – All Site Submissions Received for Preston
- Annex 4 – All Site Submissions Received for South Ribble
- Annex 5 – All Site Submissions Received for Chorley
- Annex 6 – Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries
- Annex 7 – Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology Statement Iteration 1 – April 2019.

23. The first section of the report presents the overarching vision for the plan, which is supported by eleven objectives. The chapters of the issues and options document follow an introductory message from the three Leaders of the councils and are centred on six overarching themes which cover each of the objectives. These include;

- Delivering Homes
- Economic Growth, Employment, Education and Skills
- Transport and How We Travel
- Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Resource Management and Climate
- Locations for Future Development

24. Each section of the report presents a number of issues relevant to the themes and a series of question around how we deal with them.

25. There is a total of 67 questions throughout the document and respondents can choose to complete all or some of the questions, none other than basic personal details are mandatory. This is designed to enable respondents interested in one area or one theme or site only, to respond only on those parts relevant to them.

26. There is also an optional, equality monitoring survey which will not be linked to individual responses to Issues and Options.

Citizen Space

27. This is a simple, user-friendly piece of software which is used by a large volume of Councils and other public bodies to undertake consultations.

28. The software works on PCs, iPads, other tablets and smartphones and links to the website will be widely promoted.

29. In order to submit a response to the consultation, the user is only required to provide

their name and contact details which are for these purposes only, with clear privacy and security rules in place to protect their personal data.

Proposals for Location of Development

30. Section 8.1 of the Issues and Options Consultation paper deals with the issue of future location of development.
31. Whilst the approach to the Local Plan is very much three-way with the end product being a Central Lancashire Local Plan with broadly the same policies applied, there are inevitably going to be local nuances.
32. The approach to sites and seeking consultation responses reflects those nuances as Chorley Council and the two Councils of Preston and South Ribble are taking a slightly different approach.
33. All of the sites that were received as part of the Site Suggestions exercises are being consulted on – at this stage we are not proposing any specific sites for future uses at this stage.

The Period of Consultation

34. The Issues and Options Consultation will commence at 12.01am on Monday 18th November 2019 and close at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020 (12 weeks, 4 days).
35. It is considered this is ample time for all stakeholders, partners and members of the public to be engaged and provide their views, taking account of the Christmas break.

How we will Consult

36. The main consultation mechanism will be Citizenspace, which is an online portal which is simple to use and is far more efficient than traditional paper methods of consultation.
37. Prior to the adoption of a Local Plan, an examination in public is held during which, a Planning Inspector will test the plan for soundness, to ensure it has been prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
38. The Inspector will want to see evidence of the consultation processes including representations received and how these were taken account of and Citizenspace simplifies this as digital representations are far easier to manage and analyse as opposed to hard copy submissions.
39. We will be undertaking engagement with neighbouring local authorities and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, United Utilities and Natural England as required as part of 'duty to cooperate' duties as laid out in the Localism Act 2011.
40. The three councils working with the jointly financed Central Lancashire Team, will be hosting a series of events across all three boroughs to raise the profile of the consultation to maximise engagement. This will include drop-in events, member learning sessions and parish council engagement.

41. Preston will be hosting two drop-in events in December and January in the city centre as well as a PAC meeting and will look to tag onto any other existing events, and South Ribble are hosting one same-day afternoon (1-3pm) and an evening (5-7pm) event within each of their five Neighbourhood Areas. These are to be attended by their officers and supported by the Central Lancashire Team. One of which will be at the Civic Centre (for the Leyland/Central Neighbourhood Area).
42. Chorley are hosting one event during the times of 4-7pm for each of their twenty electoral wards, plus a morning event on one weekend in the centre of Chorley.
43. There will be digital hardware available at the drop-ins to provide access to those who are either not online at home or require some support or training to use it.
44. There will also be member learning sessions delivered in each of the three councils to ensure all members are aware of the consultation and how to access the information.
45. Gateway staff, will be provided with FAQs and details of the consultation to ensure that any customers telephoning or walking in for details about the consultation, are guided to the website and provided support if they require it.
46. Hard copy submissions can be made available if customers are not able to submit their responses online.

Developer Forum

47. A Central Lancashire Developer Forum will be established to provide an effective vehicle to engage with land owners, developers, planning agents, Homes England etc.
48. Expressions of interest have been sought from stakeholders on our mailing list and to date, there are circa 40 interested in participating in the forum.
49. JAC Members have endorsed this and confirmed that members will be involved in these meetings.
50. Preparations will continue including the finalising of all promotional material and the Citizenspace portal.
51. Upon approval by the three Executive Cabinets, hard copy materials will be distributed throughout the three boroughs as required by the three Statements of Community Involvement (public buildings, post offices etc.) and the use of social media and local press used to raise the profile of the consultation prior to commencement on Monday 18th November 2019.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

52. The draft Issues and Options document has been seen and agreed by the Central Lancashire Joint Advisory Committee.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

53. None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

54. The costs of the consultation process can be met from existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

55. Please see the Monitoring Officer Comments below.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

56. Air Quality and the wide climate impact have been identified as a significant public health issue and probably the largest threat to the borough and its residents. In addition the Council has declared a Climate Emergency with an ambitious target of being carbon neutral by 2030. It is therefore imperative that sound robust and challenging policies are developed to promote carbon neutral building and reduce harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

57. The report itself and the accompanying options paper has no direct impact on air quality but must be carefully considered and improved if the objectives of the Council are to be achieved.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

58. None

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

59. None. Citizenspace is already in place.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

60. None

RISK MANAGEMENT

61. The preparation of the Joint Local Plan has been risk assessed as part of the Local Development Scheme and is subject to annual review.

62. Recent appeal decisions demonstrate that the Government's agenda to significantly increase the delivery of new housing can outweigh a proven five year supply and an out of date local plan. Without an up-to-date development plan all applications will be decided in the light of the NPPF, with its presumption in favour of sustainable development. On this basis, the Council could expect to receive planning applications on safeguarded land and other un-allocated open land sites. Should applications be refused, the impact would be an increase in appeals, together with their associated costs.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

63. An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the Local Plan Process.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

- 64.** To approve the Central Lancashire Issues and Options Paper in Appendix One as the first stage in the preparation of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan, in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012
- 65.** To accept and approve the document as drafted (subject to any misinformation or fundamental errors) recognising that to make any changes at this stage would delay the subsequent approval of the final version as the same version must be approved by all three councils.
- 66.** To approve the proposed methods of consultation including the online portal Citizenspace, and the programme for drop-in events and elected member learning sessions.
- 67.** To approve the key timetable for the consultation commencing on Monday 18th November 2019 at 12.01am and closing at 11.59pm on Friday 14th February 2020.
- 68.** To agree to the commencement of the consultation upon the approval by all three Central Lancashire councils including Preston and South Ribble (subject to any call-in period).
- 69.** To delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and City Deal, to undertake any minor text, layout and formatting changes as necessary.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

- 70.** The Council has revenue budget provision for its share of the Central Lancashire Local Plan costs including the proposed consultation work detailed in this report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 71.** We are at a very early stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan. The process we must follow is lengthy and complex. We must ensure that we act in accordance with the relevant legislation and accompanying Regulations. Central to everything is ensuring that we (the three councils concerned) carry out robust public consultation. What is proposed here is particularly extensive.
- 72.** The approval of such policy documents is not a matter for Planning Committee. It is for Cabinet and ultimately Council to approve the Local Plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

There are no background papers to this report.

APPENDICES (or There are no appendices to this report)

- Appendix 1 - Central Lancashire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation – November 2019
- Appendix 2 – All Site Submissions Received for South Ribble

<https://www.southribble.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annex%204%20-%20South%20Ribble%20Site%20Submissions%20Compressed.pdf>

- Appendix 3 – Proposed Changes to Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries
- Appendix 4 – Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology Statement

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