

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 28 JUNE 2016

Title of report	NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN
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Purpose of report	To approve the publication version of the Local Plan
Council priorities	<p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The cost of preparing the Local Plan to date excluding staff costs is approximately £394,322 and is met from within existing budgets.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A risk assessment of the project has been undertaken. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise these risks, including monthly Project Board meetings where risk is reviewed.
Equalities Impact Screening	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the Local Plan has been undertaken
Human Rights	None discernible
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	Local Plan Project Board includes Malcolm Sharp of Sharp Planning Plus and Simon Stanion of Shakespeare Martineau acting as external advisors to the Council.
Background papers	<p>Minutes and reports of meetings of the Local Plan Advisory Committee dated 29 July 2015, 16 December 2015, 20 January 2016 and 9 March 2016 as set out in Appendices D to G, respectively of this report.</p> <p>Reports to the Local Plan Advisory Committee which can be viewed at http://minutes-1.nwleics.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=251&Year=0</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/topics%5B%5D=planning-and-building</p> <p>The Town and Country (Local Planning) England (Regulations) 2012 which can be viewed at The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012</p> <p>National Planning Practice Guidance which can be found at http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/local-plans/</p>
Recommendations	<p>THAT COUNCIL:</p> <p>(i) RECEIVES THE MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF 29 JULY 2015, 16 DECEMBER 2015, 20 JANUARY 2016 AND 9 MARCH 2016;</p> <p>(ii) APPROVES THE PUBLICATION LOCAL PLAN;</p> <p>(iii) AGREES TO PUBLISH AND INVITE REPRESENTATIONS UPON THE LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT TOGETHER WITH THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT AND HABITAT REGULATION ASSESSMENT FOR A SIX WEEK PERIOD IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATION 19 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (LOCAL PLANNING) (ENGLAND)</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">REGULATIONS 2012;</p> <p>(iv) DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND REGENERATION TO SUBMIT THE LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOLLOWING RECEIPT AND CONSIDERATION OF REPRESENTATIONS INCLUDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS TO THE INSPECTOR ;</p> <p>(v) DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICES TO AGREE POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS WHERE REQUESTED BY THE PLANNING INSPECTOR DURING THE EXAMINATION AND;</p> <p>(VI) REQUESTS THE APPOINTED INSPECTOR TO RECOMMEND MODIFICATIONS TO THE SUBMITTED LOCAL PLAN TO THE COUNCIL IN THE EVENT THAT THE INSPECTOR CONSIDERS THAT SUCH MODIFICATIONS WOULD MAKE THE PLAN SOUND.</p>
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1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1 Members will recall that the draft Local Plan was approved for consultation purposes by Council at its meeting on 15 September 2015.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to agree the publication version of the Local Plan, having regard to the responses received during the consultation process and the views of the Local Plan Advisory Committee and the arrangements for submission thereafter.
- 1.3 The proposed publication version of the Local Plan is attached at Appendix A of this report.
- 1.4 The Local Plan is supported by a wide ranging evidence base as set out at Appendix B of this report. The list itself will be added to as the Local Plan progresses through the examination. In common with practice elsewhere, a number of Background Papers will also be made available when the plan is published which provide more information and clarification than can be included in the Local Plan document itself.
- 1.5 The Local Plan has also been subject to the following independent assessments as required by the Regulations:
- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment;
 - Viability study and;
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment (in respect of the river Mease Special Area of Conservation)

1.6 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been prepared which assesses the likely impact of proposed new development on a wide range of infrastructure and identifies a significant number of infrastructure 'projects' which the council, working with a range of partners, will need to address over the coming years.

2.0 LEGAL MATTERS

2.1 The preparation of the Local Plan is governed by legislation (The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Localism Act 2011) and also Regulations (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).

2.2 The Local Plan which Council is being asked to approve is the 'publication' stage Local Plan (Regulation 19). This represents the Local Plan which the Council considers should be submitted for examination. Before it can be submitted it must be published for a six-week period for representations to be made.

2.3 Following receipt of representations it is intended that the Local Plan will then be submitted for examination. It is currently anticipated that submission will be towards the end of September.

2.4 Once the Local Plan is submitted an independent Planning Inspector will be appointed by the Planning Inspectorate to consider whether the Local Plan is 'sound'. At this point the Council will no longer be in control of the timetable as this will initially be determined by the Planning Inspectorate and then by the Planning Inspector appointed to hold the examination. Based on experience elsewhere it is likely that examination hearings would take place in late 2016 / early 2017.

2.5 To be "sound", the Local Plan should be:

- **Positively prepared** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the [National Planning Policy] Framework.

2.6 Members will be aware that the Localism Act 2011 requires cooperation between local planning authorities and other public bodies to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters in Local Plans. This requirement places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

- 2.7 The legal duty is complemented by a policy requirement for public bodies to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly relating to strategic policies to deliver homes and jobs needed in the area, the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development, and the provision of infrastructure.
- 2.8 The first task of an Inspector appointed to hold an Examination is to assess whether the Council has complied with the legal Duty to Cooperate. If the Inspector concludes that this is not the case then the Local Plan will automatically fail, as the non-compliance cannot be remedied through retrospective action.

3.0 PREPARATION OF THE LOCAL PLAN

- 3.1 The following section outlines both the officer and member governance structure which has guided the preparation of the Local Plan.

Local Plan Project Board

- 3.2 Project management of the preparation of the Local Plan has been overseen by a Project Board chaired by the Director of Services and which meets on a monthly basis. Two external representatives (Malcolm Sharp a Planning consultant and Simon Stanion planning lawyer) also sat on the Project Board to act as critical friend's by challenging the development of the plan ensuring legal and policy matters were complied with , including having regard to best practice guidance from elsewhere. The external advisors have prepared a joint statement which sets out their views on whether, at this stage, the Local Plan is moving in the right direction such that it is likely (although not guaranteed) to be found 'sound' in due course. A copy of the statement is attached at Appendix C of this report.
- 3.3 In addition, a number of representatives of the Project Board also meet with the Chief Executive on a bi-monthly basis in order to ensure that the Local Plan has due regard to corporate and strategic priorities and issues.

Local Plan Advisory Committee

- 3.4 A cross party Local Plan Advisory Committee (LPAC) was established at the meeting of Council on 25 February 2014 to work with officers on the preparation of a new Local Plan, although all decisions on the Local Plan are reserved for Council.
- 3.5 Since Council approved the draft Local plan for consultation in September 2015 the Local Plan Advisory Committee (LPAC) has met on a further four occasions to consider the following matters:
- 16 December 2015 – Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document and Risk Management of the local Plan;
 - 20 January 2016 – summary of consultation responses received in respect of draft Local Plan;
 - 9 March 2016 – detailed consideration of consultation responses(chapters 4 to 7);
 - 18 April 2016 - detailed consideration of consultation responses(chapters 8 to 12)

3.6 The minutes of LPAC up until June 2015 have previously been reported to meetings of Council. The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2015 together with those listed above are appended to this report at Appendices D, E, F and G respectively and Council is asked to agree them in accordance with recommendation (i) above (save for those for the meeting of 18 April 2016 which have yet to be agreed by LPAC).

4.0 SUMMARY OF EVOLUTION OF THE LOCAL PLAN

4.1 The decision to prepare a Local Plan was made by Council at its meeting on 1 July 2014 following the withdrawal of the then Core Strategy in October 2013.

4.2 In addition to the consultation undertaken in respect of the draft Local Plan the following consultations have been undertaken under the auspices of Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Initial consultation

4.3 A consultation inviting representations on 'what the Local plan ought to contain' was undertaken between 20 June and 19 September 2014.

Limits to Development

4.4 Consultation was undertaken with Parish and Town Councils between 17 November 2014 and 9 January 2015 on draft Limits to Development and the methodology used to define them.

Town Centre Boundaries

4.5 Consultation was undertaken with Parish and Town Councils and town teams (where they exist) between 17 November 2014 and 9 January 2015 on suggested boundaries for the various town centres across the district.

Draft Local Plan

4.6 The draft Local Plan was published for consultation on 29 September 2015 up until 30 November 2015.

4.7 In total 326 individuals and organisations made 1,935 detailed comments in respect of the draft Local Plan. In addition, a further 424 standard letters were received, principally in relation to the proposed development north of Ashby de la Zouch (Money Hill) and concerns regarding possible development south of the A453 near East Midlands Airport.

4.8 The following matters were particularly significant in terms of the responses received to the consultation:

- Amount of new development, particularly housing;
- The settlement hierarchy;
- The suggested Limits to Development;
- The proposed allocation of land at Money Hill, Ashby de la Zouch;
- Concerns regarding the impact of new development (particularly housing) on existing infrastructure (including transport) and the need for additional infrastructure;

- Concerns regarding the lack of the identification of open spaces to be protected;

4.9 It should be stressed that this list is not exhaustive and these and other issues were subsequently considered by the Local Plan Advisory Committee in two reports at their meetings of 9 March and 18 April 2016 as referred to in paragraph 3.5 above.

4.10 In respect of the issue of housing requirements a relatively large number of residents, the vast majority of who live in Ashby and oppose the Money Hill site allocation in particular, considered that the housing requirement was too high, with particular concerns expressed regarding the impact upon existing infrastructure. As might be expected, some housebuilders considered that the requirement was too low; with one representation in particular from Gladman suggesting the requirement should be 637 dwellings each year (12,740 in total).

4.11 Concerns were expressed by Charnwood Borough Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council regarding the level of housing requirement. In particular concern has been expressed that:

- The proposed housing requirement has been put forward without agreement across the Housing Market Area;
- The methodology used to identify the housing requirement could be used by developers to undermine those Councils' own five year supply position;
- Alternatively, an increased provision of housing in North West Leicestershire could impact upon the delivery of housing sites elsewhere, specifically the Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension;
- Any (as yet unquantified) impact upon the OAN for the other HMA authorities as set out in the SHMA and MOU need to be understood and agreed across the HMA; and
- No consideration has been given as to the possible impact upon affordable housing resulting from a higher housing requirement.

4.12 The issue of the housing requirement is returned to later on in this report.

5.0 WHAT CHANGES ARE PROPOSED?

5.1 The majority of the changes which it is recommended are made to the Draft Local Plan agreed by Council in September 2015 involve some form of rewording of policies, either to provide clarity or to provide consistency with national policies and/or changes to the supporting text.

5.2 Where it is recommended to make changes to policies, these are summarised in the table at Appendix H of this report. More details regarding these changes together with changes to the text are set out in the reports to LPAC on 9 March 2016 and 18 April 2016.

5.3 A number of changes were recommended to the LPAC but subsequent to the LPAC meetings it has become apparent that either the proposed change is in no longer warranted or other changes are required. These are summarised below in the order they appear in the Local Plan.

- Policy S1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) – it is now proposed to delete this policy as it is understood that the Planning Inspectorate no longer

requires the inclusion of such a policy (as this is already engrained in National Planning Policy). This means that subsequent Policies S2 to S5 in the draft Local Plan are renumbered;

- Policy H1 (Housing provision: permissions) – it is now proposed to include a list of sites which had planning permission as at 1 October 2015 and where development had not commenced so as to provide clarity regarding which sites are included in this policy and to re-title the policy ‘Housing allocations: permissions’;
- Policy H2 (Housing provision: resolutions) - it is now proposed to include a list of sites which were the subject of a resolution to grant planning permission as at 1 October 2015 so as to provide clarity regarding which sites are included in this policy and to re-title the policy ‘Housing allocations: resolutions’;
- Policy Ec1 (Employment provision; permissions) – it is now proposed to include a list of sites which had planning permission as at 1 October 2015 and where development had not commenced so as to provide clarity regarding which sites are included in this policy and to re-title the policy ‘Employment allocations: permissions’;
- Policy Cc1 (Renewable Energy) – it is proposed to retain a single policy rather than having two separate policies as recommended to LPAC

5.4 Members will be aware that a new Housing and Planning Act was recently approved by parliament. Whilst the Act together with recent challenges to aspects of government policy, may have implications for policies in the Local Plan, the extent of such impact is not yet clear. For example, the Act includes provisions regarding the provision of Starter Homes as part of new housing developments. This will almost certainly have implications for the policies in the Local Plan in respect of affordable housing, but until such time as Regulations have been published which provide further details it is not possible to ascertain what changes may be needed and so no changes are proposed at this time. However, it is likely that changes to policies will be required through the examination process (see section 7 of this report)

5.5 In terms of the housing requirement, members will recall the draft Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 535 dwellings each year for the period 2011-2031 (10,700 dwellings in total). This figure is higher than the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (June 2014) which is 350 dwellings each year (7,000 dwellings in total). This is also the figure included in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed by all the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities.

5.6 There is an important difference between the housing requirement and the housing need figures (i.e. the OAN). The housing need was set out in the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Leicester & Leicestershire, and is used as the basis for calculating a five year supply and as the starting point for determining the housing requirement. The requirement takes that need ‘baseline’ figure, and applies specific local circumstances.

5.7 In the case of North West Leicestershire it was (and is) considered that there are specific local circumstances which justify a move away from the OAN identified in the 2014 SHMA; the potential impact of the (at the time that the draft Local Plan was published) proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (Roxhill) on the number of jobs in the district compared

to those assumed in the SHMA. This has since been approved by the Secretary of State on 12 January 2016.

- 5.8 Additional work, from an independent consultant who has worked on the SHMA, has been commissioned to provide more evidence regarding the likely impact of the Roxhill development on the housing figures, particularly now that the development has been approved by the Secretary of State. This work has also taken account of more recent demographic evidence since the SHMA was published and concludes that a figure of 520 dwellings per annum would be appropriate (10,400 in total over the plan period).
- 5.9 This figure is marginally less than that proposed in the draft Local Plan (535 dwellings or 10,700 dwellings over the plan period). It would not be appropriate to plan for exactly this amount of development because it may be that some sites are not developed at the rate anticipated and also this could result in artificial, potential non-defensible, boundaries being used to define sites. It is therefore proposed that the overall level of supply (i.e. the number of dwellings planned for through permissions, resolutions and locations) remains at the level proposed in the draft local plan, which will provide the Council with greater flexibility to ensure that the overall requirement will be met over the plan period.
- 5.10 The issue of the appropriate housing requirement is the issue that has generated responses to the draft Local Plan. The implications of this are considered in more detail in the following section.

6.0 HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 As noted in paragraphs 4.10 and 4.11 there were conflicting views on the issue of housing requirements. It was partly for this reason that the additional evidence outlined in paragraph 5.8 was commissioned.
- 6.2 It is important to understand, as recognised by the Government in the Planning Practice Guidance that identifying a housing requirement as part of a Local Plan is not an exact science.
- 6.3 Having regard to the Duty Cooperate (as outlined in section 2 of this report) the outcome of the additional work referred to in the previous section has been shared with all of the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA authorities and is the subject of ongoing discussions. In addition, the results of this additional work have also been shared with those authorities who the additional study suggests are likely to have residents who would be employed at the Roxhill development.
- 6.4 In respect of the latter point Members will be aware that the HMA partners have agreed to prepare a Strategic Growth Plan. This plan will be informed by a range of evidence including that relating to future housing and economic needs across the HMA. To this end a HMA wide Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) has been commissioned which will identify the current OAN for the HMA and individual districts/boroughs (it should be noted one of the consultants working on this was also the consultant engaged by the Council to provide the additional advice referred to above). Once the technical assessment has been concluded, currently scheduled for September 2016, the intention is to agree a new MOU (or equivalent agreement). This element, however, is unlikely to be concluded until late in 2016 at the very earliest.

- 6.5 Whether to carry on now with the Local Plan or await the outcome of the HEDNA raises a number of arguments for and against both options. The Council's Cabinet considered a report on this matter at its meeting of 3 May 2016. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix I. Cabinet agreed that its preferred course of action was to continue.
- 6.6 Since the meeting of Cabinet discussions with the other HMA authorities have been ongoing to try and find an agreed position. It is clear from these discussions that the other HMA authorities are extremely concerned that if North West Leicestershire was to agree its Local Plan before the new HEDNA, that this would undermine the existing SHMA and how this is then used in determining planning applications (and possibly appeals) until such time as the HEDNA is published. Based on these concerns your officers have been advised verbally that it is likely that formal objections will result from some (or all) of the other HMA authorities. It is the view of the other HMA authorities that the only appropriate mechanism for identifying the basis for the objectively assessed need is within a strategic housing evidence base (i.e. a SHMA or similar HMA wide study such as the HEDNA referred to previously) and that this should be done collaboratively and that a decision on the NWL Local Plan should therefore be delayed until the HEDNA is published.
- 6.7 As noted previously the HEDNA is scheduled to be completed in September. The only available Council meeting after this date that the Local Plan could be considered is 8 November. Allowing for consultation up to just before Christmas means that the plan would be submitted towards the end of January 2017. Based on the current projected timetable this would be a delay of about four months. As set out in the report to Cabinet of 3 May 2016 the government has stated its intention to intervene where local plans are not in place by early 2017. A delay of four months would represent a significant risk of government intervention, particularly if there was to be any further delay. This would mean the Council losing control of the local plan process and would also have financial implications for the Council, again these were set out in the Cabinet report.
- 6.8 If the Local Plan were to be delayed until the new MOU is agreed then the impact of the timetable would be even more significant. Assuming an agreement on an MOU was reached by the end of 2016, the earliest the Local Plan could be considered by Council would be 23 February 2017 with the likelihood that submission would be delayed until late May 2017.
- 6.9 As to whether this poses a risk to the Council in terms of the legal Duty to Cooperate, it should be noted that the duty is to 'co-operate', not to 'agree'. The Council will, however, need to show what steps it has taken to ensure that the other HMA (and non HMA) authorities are aware of what is being proposed in terms of the housing requirement and why, and what attempts have been made to secure the agreement of those authorities to the Council's strategy. In this respect officers briefed all of the HMA authorities on the likely approach to housing requirements prior to Council agreeing the draft Local Plan in September 2015. Since then officers have kept the HMA authorities informed of progress and remains actively engaged in ongoing discussions. It is considered that the Council has done (and will continue to do) everything possible and practical to ensure that the risk of being found not to have complied with the Duty to Cooperate has been minimised.
- 6.10 The government has recently published revised guidance as part of the National Planning Practice Guidance in which there is significant emphasis upon Inspector's seeking to work proactively with local planning authorities to try and ensure that plans can be found sound. Where necessary, this can include suspension of examinations and the Guidance also

requires consideration to be given to the option of the local planning authority making a commitment to review the plan or particular policies in the plan within an agreed period, where this would enable the Inspector to conclude that the plan is sound and meets the other legal requirements.

- 6.11 In respect of the latter point it is proposed to include wording as part of new policy S1 (Future housing and economic development needs) which would commit this Council to an early review in the event that the HEDNA and work of the Strategic Growth Plan suggested that additional housing provision was required.
- 6.12 As part of the process of assisting local planning authorities, the Planning Inspectorate recently made a Planning Inspector available for a meeting with the Local Plan Project Board. A note of the meeting (produce by officers) is attached to this report at Appendix J. It will be noted that in terms of this issue the Inspector whilst not in a position to provide any guarantees about the outcome, noted that it was important to ensure that the Council had done all it can and that it is able to document this. The Statement of Common Ground referred to at paragraph 6.6 is intended to partly address this. In addition, a Duty to Cooperate Statement which will chronicle all of the Council's engagement with other local authorities and those with whom it is required to cooperate will be submitted with the Local Plan.
- 6.13 In respect of a possible suspension, whilst this would be a disappointing outcome it would not mean the end of the Local Plan. There are numerous examples of where Local Plan examinations have been suspended and the Local Plan in question has gone on to be found sound. Indeed this happened in respect of the recent Charnwood Core Strategy.
- 6.14 Essentially, the Council is faced with a choice: carry on with the Local Plan as currently planned; or delay making a decision on the Local Plan until such time as the HEDNA and a new MOU are in place.
- 6.15 It should be appreciated that neither course of action is absolutely risk free in terms of the Council being able secure an up-to-date Local Plan as soon as possible. However, on balance and having regard to the steps taken to minimise the risk to the Council and the government's clearly stated intent that Local plans should be in place by early 2017, it is considered that the Council should carry on with the Local Plan with a view to submitting it in September 2016.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Following approval by Council the Local Plan will be published to seek representations. As the Regulations prescribe that this should be for a minimum of 6 weeks, it is proposed that the consultation will commence on **4 July 2016** and close on **15 August 2016**.
- 7.2 In addition to the Local Plan document and the SA/SEA, Viability Study and HRA as outlined above, the various documents which comprise the evidence base will also be made available to the public.
- 7.3 Any representations received as part of the consultation will need to be considered before submitting the Local Plan for examination. It is recommended that the Director of Services be delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration, to agree to the submission subject to it being considered that any

representations do not raise new issues that are required to be considered by a further Council meeting.

- 7.4 Once submitted the Planning Inspectorate will appoint an Inspector to undertake an examination. The purpose of the examination is to determine if the Local Plan satisfies the test of soundness as set at paragraph 2.5 of this report.
- 7.5 At this point the Council loses control of the process which will, instead, be the responsibility of the Planning Inspector. The following timetable is therefore, subject to change.
- Publication stage – 4 July to 15 August 2016
 - Submission – late September 2016
 - Examination – December 2016
 - Adoption – June 2017
- 7.6 During the examination stage it is likely that the Inspector will enquire of officers from time to time whether a change to a policy is something which the Council would support. In order to enable the smooth running of the examination it is recommended that the Director of Services be delegated authority to agree to changes to policies. Such changes would then be the subject of modifications recommended by the Inspector, which Members would have an opportunity to consider before the plan was adopted.
- 7.7 The Inspector can only make recommendations in respect of main modifications which are required to ensure that the plan satisfies the test of soundness and such recommendations can only be made where the Council has requested that he/she does so. This is covered by recommendation (vi).