

LOCAL PLAN ISSUES ENGAGEMENT PAPERS

5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 5.2 The Panel discussed the Local Plan Issues Engagement Papers Report at its meeting on 5th April 2023.
- 5.3 Councillor Pickering praised the excellent report, a sentiment which was echoed by the Panel.
- 5.4 Following questions from Councillors Blackwell, Pickering and Corney on the target audience of the consultation along with questions relating to resident engagement and timescales, the Panel were advised;
- That the consultation period would run for 10 weeks from 26th April – 5th July 2023;
 - That the documents would be interactive with hyperlinks being added to allow residents to access the parts of interest to them;
 - That the different forms would use language relevant to the related document and anticipated audience;
 - It was noted that the Panel requested to view the interactive documents alongside the written reports in the future.
- 5.5 The Panel heard, in response to questions from Councillors Howell and Gardener, that the team would be investigating how best to ensure public engagement could encompass all areas of the district including northern and rural areas.
- 5.6 Councillor Cawley enquired what a good engagement level would look like to the team. The Panel heard that whilst a number would be difficult to quantify at this stage, the team would endeavour to reach as many residents and businesses as possible. However, it was further assured that the examiner would be looking at methods of engagement rather than numbers of responses in the final plan. Following the response, Councillor Cawley's suggestion of a simple communications pack for members to use to encourage engagement with parish councils in particular was noted.
- 5.7 Following a question from Councillor Gleadow, the Panel heard that a communications plan was being developed to promote engagement with the younger generation across the district.
- 5.8 The Panel were advised, following a question from Councillor Gardener, that although the team wished to engage with parish councils it would not be practical or achievable to visit all throughout the district therefore alternatives were being developed.
- 5.9 Councillor Corney enquired whether there was any flexibility in the consultation dates, whereupon the Panel heard that parishes were

encouraged to communicate with the team if the dates were anticipated to cause an issue.

- 5.10 Councillor Slade expressed concerns that the system used for responses may prove discouraging due to the need to register. The Panel were assured that the registration process was very swift and required minimal details and was only required for responding to the full Issues Engagement Paper not the Summary or Easy Read versions. Furthermore messaging will be shared via social media to publicise the consultations, the mechanisms for responses to be received would be investigated. Following concerns from Councillor Pickering that Facebook is thought to have an older demographic the Panel were assured that other services such as Twitter and LinkedIn would also be used along with YouTube videos.
- 5.11 Following an enquiry from Councillor Martin relating to residents without digital access, the Panel heard that hard copies would be available in local libraries. It was further explained that written responses could be submitted or a paper form requested via phone or email. The Panel were encouraged to communicate with parishes and make use of village newsletters to communicate with residents where possible.
- 5.12 In response to questions from Councillors Gardener and Corney relating to visibility in the wider community, the Panel heard that a Communications plan was being developed to address this, alongside use of YouTube videos and a short presentation for parishes to use.
- 5.13 Following a question from Councillor Pickering about the ownership and maintenance of open spaces in new developments, the Panel heard that this is actioned in conjunction with the developers and conversations around this would continue as new developments came forward.
- 5.14 Councillor Gardener praised the suggestion of active travel across new developments but enquired if it would be possible to develop this to ensure it also runs across existing developments. The Panel were reminded that the current Call for Sites consultation includes an option for active travel and that this was an ongoing area of development.
- 5.15 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision on the recommendations.