

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Economy Environment and Place Scrutiny Committee
11 March 2021

Report Title: Borough Local Plan

Submitted by: Head of Planning & Development

Portfolios: Planning & Development

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the decision to leave the Joint Local Plan with Stoke on Trent City Council and commence work on the Borough Local Plan

Recommendation

That

1. That the report be received

Reasons

To ensure members are aware of the Councils approach to delivering a Local Plan

1. **Background**

1.1 Reports were presented to the Cabinet meetings of 9th December and 13th January with regard to the potential for the Council to separate from Stoke on Trent and commence work on a Borough Local Plan.

2. **Issues**

2.1 Whilst work had been ongoing since 2016 to prepare the Joint Plan, work was progressing slowly. To increase the potential for the Council to ensure in had an up to date Local Plan in place by the Governments deadline of December 2023, Cabinet decided to separate from Stok on Trent and commence work on the Borough Plan.

2.2 This decision was informed by online consultation, direct approaches to key holders and independent professional advice from Lichfield Plc, a national planning consultancy.

2.3 Details of both meetings are provided in the reports to the two meetings appended to this report.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 Following the decision of Cabinet on 13th January, officers are now proceeding with the creation of the Borough Local Plan.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 By separating from Stoke, the Council is now in a position that it can exert greater control over the timetabling of the Plan and its progress thus increasing the potential for the plan to be delivered by the December 2023 deadline.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 Continuing with Stoke was considered but due to risks around delivery by the 2023 deadline, it was considered the Borough Plan offered greater opportunity to meet the Governments requirements.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 Delivery of an up to date Plan by the Governments target date of December 2023 is a requirement on all Planning Authorities. The decision to separate is considered to make meeting this target more achievable.

6.2 The Council retains a number of policies and allocations within the extant 2011 Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Plan though some of these have been superseded by the publication of the NPPF in 2011 and subsequent revisions and emerging case law. Nevertheless, they remain a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications albeit the weight that can be attributed to the 2011 policies is somewhat limited.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 No significant changes identified. Both maintaining progress with the JLP and commencing work on a new Borough plan allow equal consideration to be given to equality matters.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 Delivery at pace as set out in the Cabinet report of 13th January requires additional resourcing as set out in the 9th December report amounting to an additional £550,000 over the period 2021-2023. These costs will be reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

8.2 This funding is being orientated to strengthening the planning policy team in terms of capacity and expertise and associated project management resources.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 Failure to have an adopted plan in place may expose the Council to the risk of negative appeal decisions on planning applications which result in harm to the borough.

10. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

10.1 Climate change and sustainability is a core element of any development plan. By establishing a Borough Local Plan the Council will be able to address the matter of the Climate Emergency target.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 Whilst the decision to commence a review in December was not a key decision, the January decision to separate from Stoke was taken as a key decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Cabinet meeting agenda and minutes of 9th December and 13th January.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Minutes and Agendas of previous Cabinet meetings

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None