

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION



DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR MARK CANNIFORD. THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SPATIAL PLANNING, PLACEMAKING AND ECONOMY

WITH ADVICE FROM: DIRECTOR OF HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

DECISION NO: 24/25 HSC 43

SUBJECT: UPDATE OF THE NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

KEY DECISION: NO

REASON:

The decision seeks approval to publish a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) which is the Council's timetable for the production of the Local Plan. Whilst the content of the Local Plan itself may require a key decision the timetable for its production does not.

BACKGROUND:

The current North Somerset Local Development Scheme 2024-2027 (published in July 2024) sets out the timetable for the preparation of the North Somerset Local Plan 2040. It also contains an appendix detailing the current list of adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and those in preparation.

Since the publication of the current Local Development Scheme the timetable needs to be revised to incorporate a further interim consultation on additional housing sites which is proposed in response to the new National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024 which results in North Somerset's housing requirement being significantly increased. Along with the publication of the NPPF in December the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government also issued a requirement that all Local Planning Authorities update their Local Development Schemes to reflect the transitional arrangements set out in the NPPF and submit them to MHCLG by 6 March 2025.

Consultation took place between 27 November 2023 and 22 January 2024 on a Regulation 19 Plan covering the plan period of 2024-2039. However, during the consultation in December 2023 the then government updated the NPPF which contained transitional arrangements stating that plans which had reached pre-submission consultation stage before 19 March 2024 would be assessed against the previous version of the NPPF.

In response to the transitional arrangements and to respond to issues raised through the consultation a new Regulation 19 plan was produced which contained significant changes from the previous version including a revised plan period of 2025-2040. This was approved by the council's Executive on 17 July 2024 for consultation.

However, on 30 July 2024 the government published the proposed planning reforms which had significant implications for North Somerset's Local Plan. One of the most significant changes proposed as part of the planning reforms is to revise the standard methodology for calculating housing targets for local authorities, and a requirement to meet that target including through the use of Green Belt land if necessary. These new requirements were confirmed with the publication of the NPPF in December 2024.

For North Somerset this means an increase in the housing requirement to 23,895 over the plan period which is a further minimum of 8,620 dwellings above the proposed housing supply target in our Regulation 19 plan of 15,275 dwellings.

An update to the LDS is now needed to reflect an adjustment to the timescale for the production of the emerging Local Plan to incorporate an interim consultation on the additional sites to accommodate this higher housing requirement. This will be followed by a consultation on a full Regulation 19 Plan which will contain the additional sites and any other consequential changes.

The interim consultation on the additional housing sites is now anticipated to take place in January/February 2025 with a consultation on the full Regulation 19 plan in June 2025 and submission of the plan in October 2025.

DECISION:

To agree revisions to the Local Development Scheme which sets out the timetable for the preparation of the North Somerset Local Plan to update it to include an additional interim consultation on additional housing sites and further Regulation 19 consultation.

REASONS:

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable for the Local Plan for North Somerset and any other development plan documents that the Council will be producing over the next three years. All local planning authorities are required to produce an LDS and keep it updated. The previous LDS was published in July 2024 and this revision takes account of changes to the timetable for preparation of the Local Plan 2040 and updates the list of Supplementary Planning Documents for both those adopted and those currently in preparation.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

No other options have been considered. The production and publication of the Local Development Scheme is necessary as part of the statutory local plan making process and required to be submitted to MHCLG by 6 March 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no additional costs over and above service budgets associated with producing the Local Development Scheme.

Costs

None incurred in the production of the LDS.

Funding

None

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Tackling the climate change challenge will be a key consideration throughout the new plan-making process in relation to both strategic and non-strategic policies.

CONSULTATION

Consultation will continue to be undertaken on the Local Plan 2040 in accordance with the relevant regulations.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Not producing an up to date Local Development Scheme may increase the risk of a legal challenge to the Local Plan in that the correct process and procedure has not been undertaken.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken as part of the Local Plan process and is published alongside the plan at every stage of consultation.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

None from the update to the LDS. The new North Somerset local plan has implications for many service areas including education, transport, sustainability, environment, equalities, regeneration, adult social services and public health.

APPENDICES


North Somerset Local Development Scheme January 2025.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed:  Executive Member for Spatial Planning,
Placemaking and Economy.

Date: 3 February 2025

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed:  Director of Healthy and Sustainable
Communities

Date: 3 February 2025