

SUBJECT:	CENTRAL LINCOLNSHIRE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE/LOCAL PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20
DIRECTORATE:	COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	TOBY FORBES TURNER, PLANNING POLICY MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an annual report detailing work undertaken by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (CLJSPC) over the period April 1st 2019 through to 31st March 2020.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Joint Planning Committee reached its tenth year over the course of 2019/20. This year saw substantial progress being made with the production of the new local plan. It also saw the arrival of COVID-19 which has significantly impacted on the local plan process, but more importantly on the planning and development sector, introducing significant uncertainty over what will be deliverable in the short term and what measures may be necessary to address COVID-19 in local plans.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Plan (adopted in April 2017) sets out the planning policies for Central Lincolnshire (including the City) and this involves allocating parcels of land for development as well as identifying land which should be protected from development. The Plan includes a set of 57 policies which guide decision makers i.e. planning committee on future planning applications for the City
- 3.2 As reported in last year's report to committee, 2018/19 saw significant changes at a national level with the introduction of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF2) and substantive changes to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This new policy and changes to the guidance had significant implications for Central Lincolnshire and was the primary trigger for the decision to review the Local Plan which started in January 2019.

4. Summary of Progress

- 4.1 The AGM meeting took place on 17 June 2019, with Cllr Metcalfe voted as Chair for the year. At the meeting the following items were considered:
- the Local Plans Team Annual Report;
 - the proposed Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation;
 - the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Budget Update.
- 4.2 The subsequent meeting took place on 23 September 2019. At this meeting the Committee considered items on:

- the five year land supply;
- the Issues and Options Consultation findings;
- the Local Plan timetable; and
- the Lincoln Transport Strategy

4.3 The next meeting took place on 13 January 2020. At this the Committee received a Local Plan Budget report and an update on the Local Plan progress

4.4 The final Committee meeting of 2019-20 took place on 16 March 2020. At this meeting the Committee received a report on the progress of the Local Plan and a policy on the options for addressing climate change through the Local Plan. This meeting took place one week prior to the COVID-19 lockdown and at a time when there was great uncertainty about its likely impacts on local government and the local plan process. It was noted that future meetings may not be held in person and that the situation would be monitored by democratic services.

4.5 **Forward Look**

4.6 In the coming year, it is anticipated that the impacts of COVID-19 on society, the economy and plan-making will start to be understood. The plan will need to adapt to these impacts as they emerge. However, as officers working on the plan are able to work remotely from their homes, progress will continue on developing the evidence for the plan and on the drafting of the plan. This ongoing work will help reduce any impacts on the Local Plan timetable.

4.7 The focus of activity for the Local Plans Team over the coming year will be to continue to progress the Local Plan review in a timely and efficient manner, and to continue other statutory functions and reporting, such as the Five Year Land Supply, reviewing any changes to national policy and responding to neighbouring council's plans. This will include developing a better understanding of the implications of the recent mandate from CLJSPC around embedding climate change initiatives within the Local Plan, as well as maintaining a watching brief on the impacts of COVID-19 on national planning policy and likely implications of both on the contents of the plan and the time table for adoption.

4.8 The work of the Local Plan Team will include:

- Progressing and finalising key evidence for the Local Plan;
- Drafting the Local Plan;
- Undertaking the Regulation 18 'Further Draft' consultation on the Local Plan;
- Carrying out statutory plan-making functions such as fulfilling the Duty to Cooperate and undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment; and
- Maintaining existing functions such as responding to neighbouring plan consultations, producing and publishing the five year land supply report, providing planning application and appeals support where requested, and dealing with queries from the public

4.9 Of particular note is the evidence base work on climate change where specialist consultants were appointed in July to assess the extent to which the new Local

Plan should address the issue. This includes establishing a position statement to set out the role the Local Plan could play in delivering climate change objectives; identifying what the Plan can and cannot influence in respect of carbon reductions and defining what net zero carbon means for the Plan and what needs to be done to achieve it.

4.10 The Local Plans Team will report back to the Joint Committee at its next meeting to update on progress of the plan and the proposed timetable for taking the plan through consultation to submission for examination.

4.11 **Budget Position**

4.12 The budget for 2019/20 is set out in Appendix 1. This represented the first year of a three year budget approved by Members of the Joint Planning Committee on the 13th January 2020, and which is designed to ensure that the Joint Partnership is adequately supported to facilitate the Local Plan making process.

4.13 Overall, the Local Plans budget is in a healthy position, with only the following material variances to note;

- There was a saving on employee costs arising from a vacancy within the Local Plans Team. The Team are now fully resourced following a successful appointment of a Planning Policy Officer.
- There was additional consultancy costs associated with the commissioning of evidence base to support the plan making process, but which reflects the scope of the issues that the revised Local Plan is seeking to address.

5. **Strategic Priorities**

5.1 Let's drive economic growth

The Local Plan continues to support sustainable levels of growth and regeneration for the City and Central Lincolnshire area and will provide a positive planning policy approach to help stimulate local economic growth.

5.2 Let's reduce inequality

The Local Plan sets a target for and supports the provision of affordable housing across Central Lincolnshire thereby helping reduce housing inequality across the City.

5.3 Let's deliver quality housing

The Local Plan sets ambitious but deliverable targets for the provision of new houses across the City through specific site allocations contained in Policy LP48 (Sustainable Urban Extensions) and Policy LP49 (Residential allocations in the Lincoln area). Policy LP11 in the Local Plan sets a target for and supports the provision of affordable housing across Central Lincolnshire.

5.4 Let's enhance our remarkable place

At the heart of the Local Plan sits the vision of 'a prosperous, stronger and sustainable Central Lincolnshire' and this vision and the policies contained within the plan will help to achieve enhancing the City through growth and regeneration.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

The Local Plan contains policies that will have longer term financial implications for the City and Council as a whole most notably housing growth including affordable housing, infrastructure provision, employment and regeneration. The financial implications have been incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy as the Local Plan is applied.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

None arising from this report

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The Local Plan is accompanied by an Integrated Impact Assessment that assesses the potential impact of proposals (strategies, policies, programmes, projects, plans or other developments) on issues that previously may have been assessed separately, such as economic, environmental, sustainability, equal opportunities and health and wellbeing.

7. Risk Implications

7.1 (i) Options Explored

Not applicable

7.2 (ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach

8. Recommendation

8.1 That this Annual Report be noted by members as a fair summary of activity of the CLJSPC during 2019/20

Is this a key decision?	No
Do the exempt information categories apply?	No
Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?	No
How many appendices does the report contain?	1
List of Background Papers:	None

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