



Meeting	Full Council
Date	11 January 2023
Report Title	Neighbourhood Plan Update
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1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks to update Councillors on the progress of Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan since the previous update report in November 2022.

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Councillors will recall a previous report providing an update on the Neighbourhood Plan, which was presented to Full Council on 23 November 2022. This report explained that the focus of recent Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings had been to review and agree responses to the comments received during the Regulation 14 public consultation on the Draft Plan, and to modify the Plan accordingly in response to these comments.

2.2 The previous report explained that AECOM were currently working up sets of alternative options for Town Centre Planning Policies TC1-TC3 as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process.

3.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

3.1 At the December Steering Group Meeting, the Group reviewed and agreed responses to the comments received on Transport Policies T1-T5, the revised Green Buffers Policy GI5 & the revised Sustainability & Climate Change Policies SCC1 & SCC2. The Neighbourhood Plan was modified accordingly, in response to these comments. At the January Steering Group Meeting, the Group will agree responses to comments made on the Chippenham Design Guide and amend the Guide accordingly.

3.2 It is envisaged that at the February Steering Group Meeting the Group will complete its final set of draft responses to comments received on the Plan's Housing and Economy policies.

3.3 Planning Practice Guidance indicates that where an SEA is required this should be produced at the same time as a draft neighbourhood plan and form part of the Regulation 14 Consultation. The late screening opinion received from Wiltshire Council (during the Neighbourhood Plan's own Regulation 14 Consultation) meant that this was not possible. The advice received from the Planning Consultant, Locality and AECOM (in contrast to the advice received from Wiltshire Council) is that the Regulation 14 Consultation should be repeated with the SEA. This complies with the suggested

approach set out in Planning Practice Guidance and removes the risk of any challenge and the possibility of having to return to this stage at later date.

- 3.4 To carry out the Regulation 14 Consultation with a revised version of the Plan (revised a result of comments received from the original Regulation 14 Consultation) and SEA would be the option with least risk. However, it would also add additional cost and delay to the Plan timeline - additional cost as a result of having to factor in an extra round of professional re-designing and re-formatting of the Plan before submission to Wiltshire Council, and additional delay in having to respond to a whole host of further comments on the revised version of the Plan.
- 3.4 The alternative option to the one outlined above, and an option which both the Planning Consultant and AECOM are satisfied with, is that of repeating Regulation 14 Consultation with the original version of the Plan plus the SEA. It will be made clear to the public and stakeholders that the purpose of the repeat Regulation 14 Consultation is to seek comments on the SEA only and/or any additional/revised comments on the Plan as a result of having read the SEA. At the end of the repeat Regulation 14 Consultation AECOM will suggest recommendations that can subsequently be incorporated into the revised Plan for submission to Wiltshire Council, and this will adequately demonstrate how the SEA has informed/influenced plan-making.
- 3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan timeline is attached in **APPENDIX A**. Based on current estimates the repeat Regulation 14 Consultation will commence in February 2023, the Plan will be submitted to Wiltshire Council in Spring 2023 and the Plan will be 'made' in Autumn 2023.
- 3.6 The Wiltshire Local Plan Review has been delayed by approximately six months and it is currently expected that a Draft Local Plan will be published for consultation in Quarter 3 of 2023. The period that the Reviewed Wiltshire Local Plan will cover has also been extended from 2036 to 2038. However, the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in line with the current Local Plan, rather than the Reviewed Local Plan.

4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITIES

- 4.1 The development of a Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the following corporate priorities:
- Provide and develop facilities and services that are accessible, inclusive and promote health and well-being.
 - Play an active role in the future development of the town through collaboration with partners, stakeholders, and our community.
 - Help to create a future that is carbon neutral, environmentally sustainable and resilient to the impact of climate change.
 - Maintain and create opportunities to enhance our green spaces and provide a clean and safe environment.
 - Provide and develop facilities and services that promote Chippenham as an attractive and vibrant market town and celebrate its rich history, heritage, and culture.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Steering Group continues to be supported by the Head of Planning, Planning Consultant(s) (external support), Administrative Officers, the Council's Communications & Customer Services Manager and Corporate Management Team.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 For the financial year 2022/23, in addition to payroll costs, there is a Capital/EMF budget of £34,000 to cover print/design, consultant and professional fees, to be charged against Community Infrastructure Levy income, and an additional Income & Expenditure budget of £3,000 to cover other items such as website and postage.
- 6.2 To date this financial year, £1392 has been spent on fees for the Planning Consultant, and £604 on yearly maintenance, hosting, domain registration and SSL certificate for the Neighbourhood Plan website. The majority of spending, on amendments to the design/format of the Plan and production of amended maps, is envisaged to take place in early 2023.

7.0 CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report is providing an update on Neighbourhood Plan progress for Councillors to note and therefore does not have any direct climate or ecological impacts.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Full Council notes the content of this Report, which is for information purposes only.