



**Rochford District  
Council**

**PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE**

**27 JULY 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Local Development Scheme 2023-25
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Director of Place

**REPORT SUMMARY**

The Local Development Scheme is a formal document that sets out a forward timetable for the preparation of development plan documents and other core planning documents. This report consists of an update to the Council's Local Development Scheme, covering the period 2023 to 2025.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

R1. That the Planning Policy Committee notes the proposed programme plan, set out at Appendix B.

R2. That the Planning Policy Committee recommends to Full Council that the Local Development Scheme 2023-25, attached at Appendix A, be adopted and published on the Council's website.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to publish and maintain a Local Development Scheme which, inter alia, identifies the development plan documents that it intends to produce and sets out a timetable for their production.

1.2 Adoption of an up-to-date Local Development Scheme to replace the existing out-of-date Local Development Scheme would meet this requirement and provide greater clarity to stakeholders over the intended programme timetable for the production of key planning documents, including the New Local Plan.

**2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

2.1 Failing to adopt an up-to-date Local Development Scheme would be contrary to the Planning and compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and not considered a realistic alternative.

**3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3.1 As set out above, all local planning authorities are required by law to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS) for their area.

3.2 The LDS must identify:

- the local development documents which are to be development plan documents;
- the subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document is to relate;
- which development plan documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
- any matter or area in respect of which the authority have agreed to the constitution of a joint committee under section 29;
- the timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents;
- such other matters as are prescribed.

3.3 The key role of the LDS is to identify the development plan documents that the Council intends to prepare and set out a timetable for these development plan documents. At this stage, the sole development plan documents being prepared by the Council is the New Local Plan. The Council could look to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the future.

3.4 The Council’s existing LDS was adopted in 2021 and is now significantly out of date. There is therefore a need to adopt a new LDS which sets out an ambitious but realistic timetable for the next stages of preparing the New Local Plan. The suggested timetable is included below:

Stage	Target Date
<i>Issues and Options Document public consultation</i>	<i>December 2017 to March 2018</i>
<i>Spatial Options Document public consultation (Regulation 18)</i>	<i>July to September 2021</i>
Preferred Options Document public consultation (Regulation 18)	Winter 2023/24
Proposed Pre-Submission Document public consultation (Regulation 19)	Winter 2024/25
Submission to Secretary of State for independent examination (Regulation 22)	Spring 2025
Examination hearings	Summer 2025

Main Modifications consultation	Autumn 2025
Inspector’s Report expected	Autumn / Winter 2025
Adoption by Full Council	Autumn / Winter 2025

- 3.5 The Government has indicated that it intends to introduce a deadline for the submission of Local Plans produced under the current system of Summer 2025. Whilst it is probable that this deadline may be extended in light of ongoing uncertainty over the introduction of a new plan-making system, the Council’s timetable for preparing a New Local Plan, as proposed in both the short- and medium-terms, is aimed at meeting this stated deadline.
- 3.6 At Appendix B, a high-level programme plan is included which sets out a summary of the key tasks and stages required to support the preparation of the New Local Plan in the short-term. This programme plan is a “live” document that will be continually updated to monitor actual progress against objectives and the real time identification of timetable pressures. It includes a summary timetable for key pieces of evidence which are being prepared to meet the proposed timetable, including:
- Local Plan Transport Assessment
  - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
  - Whole Plan Viability Assessment
- 3.7 As is practice, key evidence documents will be reported into future meetings of the Planning Policy Committee.
- 3.8 It is recognised that the delivery of a Preferred Options consultation for Winter 2023/24 relies upon having clarity over a future “preferred” strategy and policy matters. There are therefore key meetings and decisions required over the Summer and Autumn to set parameters and thereafter help define the preferred strategy. It is recognised that this stage may require more detailed considerations, which may present a future need for timetable adjustment. Nevertheless, it is considered favourable to set a positive timetable in the Local Development Scheme and consider the need to adjust the timetable at a later stage.
- 3.9 The Local Development Scheme also includes a range of high-level programme risks and potential mitigations aimed at ensuring the timetable remains realistic and achievable. This will be complemented by more detailed risk analysis undertaken by officers at the project level.
- 3.10 Pressures to the delivery of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to the Planning Policy Committee where appropriate considerations can be made as to whether the timetable requires adjustment, or whether other dependencies within the process need to be re-considered.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The delivery of the New Local Plan and related documents is planned and accounted for within the agreed Local Development Framework earmarked reserve.

**5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Council, as local planning authority, is obliged to publish and maintain a Local Development Scheme for its area, in line with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The document attached at Appendix A, and the recommendation set out in this report, would ensure this legal requirement is met.

**6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 The Local Development Scheme 2023-25, as attached at Appendix A, sets out a timetable for the delivery of key planning documents. The delivery of these key planning documents to the defined timetables is ambitious, but considered realistic in the context of existing, agreed resources and budgets. High-level related risks and mitigations are reported within the document.
- 6.2 Nevertheless, any future risks to the timetables set out in the Local Development Scheme which arise as a consequence of resource constraints will be reported to the Planning Policy Committee where appropriate actions to resolve these risks can be considered.

**7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The Local Development Scheme 2023-25, as attached at Appendix A, identifies a range of high-level risks to the delivery of the timetable contained within the document. These programme risks will be kept under review and mitigated against wherever possible.
- 7.2 It is expected that future risks to programme delivery will be reported to the Planning Policy Committee where appropriate actions to resolve these risks can be considered.

**8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The report itself is not subject to engagement or consultation but identifies timetables for the undertaking of future consultation. This consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement 2022.

**9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no equality or diversity impacts arising from this report.

**10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no direct environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Local Development Scheme 2023-25  
Appendix B – High-Level Local Plan Programme Plan

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>