

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 12 OCTOBER 2017

TITLE: TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN –
ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR DANNY PURTON, PORTFOLIO
HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT

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This is not a Key Decision

It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I007558

This decision is not subject to Call-in procedures for the following reasons:

The report is for noting only.

This decision will affect Toddbrook Ward.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- A** Notes the contents of the report.
- B** Notes the informal Issues and Options Consultation due to be undertaken by Allies and Morrison, subject to Local Development Plan Panel input at its meeting on Wednesday 4 October 2017.

BACKGROUND

1. As part of the Local Development Plan process, in June 2017, Cabinet approved for the Council to produce an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the town centre.
2. The AAP which forms part of the Local Development Plan enables the Council to produce a detailed spatial planning framework that will support both development and regeneration of Harlow Town Centre.
3. In order to produce a robust and fit-for-purpose plan that meets planning regulations, the AAP needs to carefully consider future development opportunities, uses and needs that can inform a Master Plan for the town centre.
4. A successful AAP will include an evidence base that examines and validates

future development and demand, establishes the impact of future growth, infrastructure and connectivity issues and opportunities especially in the context of the wider urban area and is inclusive to the needs and issues of the town centre stakeholders.

5. The AAP provides an opportunity for the Council to work closely with existing and future stakeholders to create a vision that will encourage investment, provide for sustainable growth, and create an aspirational town centre that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
6. Anticipated housing and economic growth through developments such as Gilston Park, Harlow Enterprise Zone, as well as Public Health England relocating to the town, create an impetus in securing the successful and sustainable future of Harlow Town Centre.

PROGRESS TO DATE

7. In July 2017, consultants Allies and Morrison were appointed to support the Council in developing the AAP, in particular the consultation requirements under Regulation 18 and the publication of the proposed AAP under Regulation 19 (pre-submission to Secretary of State).
8. Over the summer Allies and Morrison have undertaken scoping and desktop research to understand the work to date and current landscape of the town centre, including pipeline developments by both the public and private sector.
9. In particular consultants have carried out:
 - a) Evidence base review;
 - b) Sustainability appraisal scoping report;
 - c) Urban design analysis; and
 - d) Movement baseline.
10. The above work forms part of the evidence base that will support in the preparation of the AAP and is important to help shape the future direction (vision) of the town centre.
11. In addition to the above, a stakeholder workshop is scheduled to take place early October 2017.
12. The aim of the workshop is to gain an understanding from the various town centre stakeholders of the issues and options that are present and using their views to inform the development of the AAP.

13. The workshop forms part of the informal engagement process and provides an opportunity to better understand the town centre and the aspirations of its stakeholders (both public and private) who will play a key role in shaping its future direction and most importantly economic success.
14. The work gathered from the evidence base and stakeholder engagement will support the development of the issues and options that will form the basis of the AAP.

TIMETABLE

15. Over the coming months work will progress in preparing the AAP and will require Full Council approval at various stages to meet statutory planning obligations.
16. The following timetable sets out the key dates for the AAP in the coming months:

4 October 2017	Local Plan Panel	Consultants Update and approval of stakeholder workshop content
10 October 2017	Stakeholder Workshop	Informal consultation to inform issues and options
12 October 2017	Cabinet	Progress update
6 December 2017 (TBC)	Local Plan Panel	Formal presentation of draft Issues and Options
25 January 2018	Cabinet	Recommendation to approve Regulation 18 consultation
February – March 2018		Regulation 18 consultation
April – May 2018		Production of Draft AAP

June 2018	Local Plan Panel	Draft AAP presented
June 2018	Cabinet	Recommendation to approve draft AAP under Regulation 19
August – September 2018		Publication under Regulation 19

IMPLICATIONS

Place (includes Sustainability)

None specific.

Author: **Graeme Bloomer, Head of Place**

Finance (Includes ICT)

None specific resulting from the recommendations set out within the report. However, economic growth is likely to play an increasingly important role in the longer term funding arrangements for the Council under the Government's proposals for full Business Rates Retention and the removal of Revenue Support Grant.

Author: **Simon Freeman, Head of Finance**

Housing

As outlined in the body of the report.

Author: **Andrew Murray, Head of Housing**

Community Wellbeing (includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

As contained within the report.

Author: **Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing**

Governance (includes HR)

The continued undertaking of this commission by the appointed Consultants assists with statutory consultation requirements.

Author: **Brian Keane, Head of Governance**

Background Papers

Harlow Local Development Plan: Local Development Scheme, Development Management Policies: Proposed Town Centre Area Action Plan, Cabinet – 22 June 2017.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

AAP - Area Action Plan

Regulation 18 - The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Preparation of a Local Plan – A local planning authority must notify and consult bodies who may have an interest the plan.

Regulation 19 - The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Publication of a Local Plan – Before submitting a plan to the Secretary of State the local planning authority must make the proposed plan available for inspection and allow specific consultative bodies to make representation.