

REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee 6 March 2024
SUBJECT:	Direction Of Travel Consultation Document
LEAD OFFICER:	Kevin Owen (Planning Policy & Conservation Manager)
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Martin Lury (Chair of Planning Policy Committee)
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendations supports:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Delivering the right homes in the right places; • Supporting our environment to support us; • Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>Engagement and consultation on what should be within the Arun Local Plan update will ensure residents can help shape sustainable new communities and places, where new homes meet the needs of current and future generations by reducing their carbon footprint, enhancing biodiversity , promoting active healthy lifestyles through walking and cycling, leisure, arts and culture and through enhancing the quality of heritage, natural and built environments while promoting economic growth, in a sustainable manner.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this Direction of Travel public consultation document.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To seek Committee’s approval that the draft Direction of Travel Document be published for public consultation 25 March 2024 for six weeks closing 6 May 2024 in order to progress the update to the Arun Local Plan.
- 1.2. Following early engagement, at stakeholder workshops (4-5 December 2023 and 17 January 2024) and a member workshop (12 February), the Direction of Travel Document has been revised and will be published for public consultation with a Regulation 18 Notice, forming an Issues & Options consultation stage, seeking views on what should be in the Local Plan.
- 1.3. This deferred report outlines the content and purpose of the Direction of Travel document.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning Policy Committee agrees:

- i. That the Direction of Travel Document be published with a regulation 18 Notice and a newspaper article release, for a 6-week public consultation commencing on 25 March and closing on 6 May 2024;
- ii. That delegated authority be given the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Policy Committee, to refine the Direction of Travel Documents for publication should there be any minor amendments following the meeting.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. On 19 July 2023 Full Council approved the Planning Policy Committee's recommendation to lift the pause to the Arun Local Plan Update. Officers are now progressing work on early engagement and steps towards the first stage public consultation on Issues & Options in the early March 2024.
- 3.2. To aid the process of early engagement, a Direction of Travel Document (DoT) has been produced (Background Paper 1). The DoT includes the council's Vision & Objectives which scope and provide a framework for the Local Plan and identifies issues and challenges (grouped under relevant themes) followed by potential policy options across a range of planning topics, inviting views on these or whether other matters should also be included. The DoT has been subject to several stakeholder workshops including a member workshop. As a result, the DoT has been refined and is now ready to form part of the Regulation 18 Issues & Options consultation beginning on 25 March 2024 for six weeks, together with the statutory Regulation 18 Notice asking what should be in the plan.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1. Part of the process for preparing the Local Plan update requires the council to undertake early engagement and consultation with the public and key stakeholders. How this is done is not prescribed at Regulation 18 but best practice includes and setting up workshops with key infrastructure providers, government agencies, interest groups, adjacent planning authorities and Parish and Town Councils and publishing an Issues & Options public consultation. Arun's Issues & Options consultation is therefore, to be provided by the Direction of Travel (DoT) document.
- 4.2. Following workshop engagement, the DoT has been fine-tuned in the light of comments received (Background Paper 2) and if agreed by members, will be published forming an 'Issues & Options' consultation in March 2024. This will include the statutory Notice under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Notice must set out; the title of the Local Plan to be prepared; the Plan period; the area it covers (i.e. the Arun Local Planning Authority area); and invite representations on what the Plan should contain.

4.3. In addition, to help the public, and to alert them to the consultation on the DoT document, a more accessible format newspaper article has been produced to be advertised in the local press (Background Paper 3). This article simplifies and summarises (paraphrasing some of the issues and options), in a more compact and visibly legible form, the DoT document to stimulate interest.

4.4. The main DoT document sets out:-

- The introduction and context for preparing the Local Plan update;
- Council's Vision & Objectives for the Local Plan update and invites comment on the V&O;
- Themes based on the Vision & Objectives;
- Key challenges and issues by theme;
- Potential policy options by theme;
- Questions on the policy options and whether there are others including whether to save existing policies that are 'fit for purpose' or remain to be implemented or otherwise amend, replace or provide new policies to make them more effective.

4.5. The specific themes covered broadly following the V&O include:-

- Climate Change
- Environmental Life support Network
- Homes in the Right Places
- Economy, Health and Wellbeing
- Placemaking, Heritage & Culture
- Infrastructure to support our Needs

4.6. Some of the headline options raised include how planning policies can tackle climate change and key questions on the most sustainable spatial approach to where and how people should live and work in Arun and how to meet future housing and development needs.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. The DoT document is meant to be a 'thought starter' and does not necessarily cover every single issue or policy requirement which is the purpose of engagement and consultation.

5.2. The Committee are asked to agree the Direction of Travel document for the purposes of public consultation for 6 weeks commencing 25 March, closing on 6 May 2024. Following the public consultation a report will be made to the next appropriate meeting, on the results of the consultation.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1. No consultations have yet been undertaken because this document is not setting out policy, it is intended as a means of undertaking early engagement with stakeholders leading to a subsequent public consultation inviting views on what should be included in the Local Plan Update.

7. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 7.1. The options are to agree the DoT to progress with the Local Plan update or not to agree the Direction of Travel document with the risk that progress on the Local Plan update timetable is delayed.

8. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 8.1. The implementation of the recommendation accords with the key decision to lift the pause to the Local Plan update and the budget resource allocated to this task including the need to ensure that under or overspends are reported against the financial year and the councils Medium Term Financial Strategy.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1. Implementing the recommendation will help to minimise the risk that the council will fail to meet national policies and regulations for plan making.

10. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 10.1. There are no governance or legal implications arising for the recommendation in this report.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 11.1. There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 12.1. There are no direct health and safety impacts arising from this report. As plan making progresses to adoption informed by public consultation, it is likely that health and safety associate with growth and development of Arun will improve through appropriate policies and mitigation.

13. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 13.1. There are no direct implications for council property.

14. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

- 14.1. The proposals may have a positive impact on community health and wellbeing through engaging with stakeholders and the public on what should be included in the Arun Local Plan to address specific needs of sections of the community.

15. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

- 15.1. The DoT document does not have direct implications climate change although as plan making progresses informed by engagement and consultation, any potential positive and negative impacts of policies in the Local Plan update should balance and mitigate being subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

16. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

16.1. There are no direct adverse implications for crime and disorder.

17. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

17.1. There are no direct adverse implications for human rights.

18. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

18.1. There are no implications.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Background Paper 1: 'Direction of Travel Document' Arun Local Plan March 2024':-
<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=1866&Ver=4>

Background Paper 2: Schedule of Workshop comments by theme and proposed response.
<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=1866&Ver=4>

Background Paper 3: Draft News Article Summary of Direction of Travel Document.
<https://democracy.arun.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=1866&Ver=4>