

26 January 2024

## **Executive recommends updating the Local Plan: Strategies and Sites**

Last night, (25 January) our Executive agreed to recommend updating our Local Plan: Strategies and Sites (2019) (LPSS). This will now go to full council on 21 February for final approval.

It is a legal requirement for us to review our Local Plan within five years of its adoption. It's also vital for us to keep our Local Plan up to date to create a thriving and sustainable community that addresses the evolving needs and aspirations of our residents.

If an update is approved, we will look in greater detail at our evidence including the housing, retail and commercial needs of our borough.

Lead Councillor for Planning, Cllr Fiona White, says:

"To be effective and deliver the right results, Local Plans need to be kept up to date. The review report determines our adopted LPSS needs updating to continue to meet the needs of our community. There have been a lot of changes to the way we live since the existing plan was adopted in 2019 which is why it needs to be updated to reflect the way we run our lives now. I want to reassure residents that this does not mean our existing Local Plan will become redundant should Council agree to an update process. It will remain the primary consideration in determining development applications in the borough.

"An update to the plan needs to be based on evidence. We are in the very early stages of deciding what evidence we need and the best way of gathering it, but regular updates and any significant developments will be communicated promptly. We are committed to transparency at every stage of this process. We understand the importance of keeping our residents informed about timelines and key milestones. I encourage residents to stay engaged and, at the appropriate time, to share your thoughts with us."

If approved at full council, the first phase of the process will consider the budget, timetable and scope of work required to carry out a Local Plan update. This phase is expected to be complete before the end of the year when more clarity on Government's approach to planning reform is expected. A report detailing these findings will come back to Executive for review and approval.