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Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

27<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Councillor D Welsh

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Petitions for Immediate Review of the Local Plan

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**Is this a key decision?**

No.

Although the matters within the report affect all wards in the city, it is not anticipated that the impact will be significant

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**Executive Summary:**

This report provides a formal response to two petitions submitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 sponsored by Councillor G. Ridley, bearing 4917 combined signatures. The first petition reads:

“We the undersigned petition the Council to review their Local Plan to protect our green spaces”.

The second petition reads:

“Coventry City Council should begin a review of its Local Plan now, and return land to green belt”

This report has considered the nature of the request and the evidence to support them. It recommends that there is no basis for an immediate review of the Local Plan.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member is requested to:

1. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities is requested to hear the Local Plan petitions and forward any recommendations in relation to those petitions to the Cabinet for them to take into account at their meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 when they consider the Review of the Local Plan report.

**List of Appendices included:**

None.

**Background papers:**

None.

**Other useful documents:**

None.

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No.

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No.

## Report title: Petitions for Immediate Review of the Local Plan

### 1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 This report provides a formal response to two petitions submitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 and sponsored by Councillor G. Ridley, containing 4,917 combined signatures. The first petition reads:

“We the undersigned petition the Council to review their Local Plan to protect our green spaces”.

The second petition reads:

“Coventry City Council should begin a review of its Local Plan now, and return land to green belt”

- 1.2 Policy DS1 of the Local Plan sets out the triggers that, if engaged, would lead to a review of the Local Plan. It states:

*“3. The Council will undertake a comprehensive review of national policy, the regional context, updates to the evidence base and monitoring data before 31st March 2021 to assess whether a full or partial review of the Plan is required. In the event that a review is required, work on that review will commence immediately.”*

- 1.3 A report is being taken to Council on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 that reports on progress against the triggers laid out in DS1. The report concludes that the triggers have not been met and that there is no requirement to commence a Plan Review in March 2021.
- 1.4 It should be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Local Plans to be reviewed every five years, and as such the Local Plan will be subject to a review in December 2022.
- 1.5 One petition, after calling for a Review, detailed an objection to the use of population projections from the Office of National Statistics (ONS). ONS population projections have been the sole national projection published by government since 2014, and we are required by government to use these figures in calculating the overall housing need during plan making.
- 1.6 Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2017, government has introduced the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need. This Methodology uses the same ONS projections used for the Local Plan, both currently and in the recently consulted-upon changes to the Methodology, and a plan review will need to utilise the Standard Methodology as a basis for calculating housing need.
- 1.7 Further, the other authorities within the Housing Market Area have all progressed Local Plans based on ONS population projections, including meeting Coventry’s unmet housing need. The provisions of the Duty to Cooperate and the Memorandum of Understanding mean that a common evidence base for housing growth, along with other matters, are essential for comprehensive spatial planning.
- 1.8 It is therefore concluded that any plan review would need to use the Standard Methodology when calculating housing need. Objection to the use of ONS population projections is not considered a relevant reason to commence a plan review.

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 The only alternative option available in this case is to commence a review of the Local Plan. A report is scheduled to be considered at Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 when Cabinet will make a decision on whether to carry out a review of the Local Plan and these decisions will be taken into account as part of the decision making process.

## **3 Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 No consultation has been undertaken as part of this report.

## **4 Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 There is no timetable for implementing this decision as no actions are recommended beyond noting the report.

## **5 Comments from the Director of Finance and the Director of Law and Governance**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **6 Other implications**

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?**

This report itself does not respond to any of the council key priorities or objectives within the One Coventry Corporate Plan.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

There are no risks associated with this report

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

No direct impact.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (ECA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

There are no implications identified.

## 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are no implications identified.

### Report author:

#### Name and job title:

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### Service

Streetscene and Regulatory Services

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