

Report

Cabinet



Part 1

Date: 13 July 2022

Subject **Replacement Local Development Plan - Vision, Issues and Objectives**

Purpose To provide an update on the progression of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) and report on the consultation responses received on the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives.

Author Planning Policy Manager

Ward All

Summary As part of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) process, public engagement has been undertaken in respect of the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives. The eight-week engagement process sought to increase awareness of the RLDP process, seek consensus on the key issues identified for the Plan, and request feedback on the draft Vision and Objectives which will set the direction for the RLDP.

Proposal **Cabinet is asked to note the consultation comments received on the Draft Vision, Issues and Objectives and endorse the proposed responses.**

Action by Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

Timetable Immediate

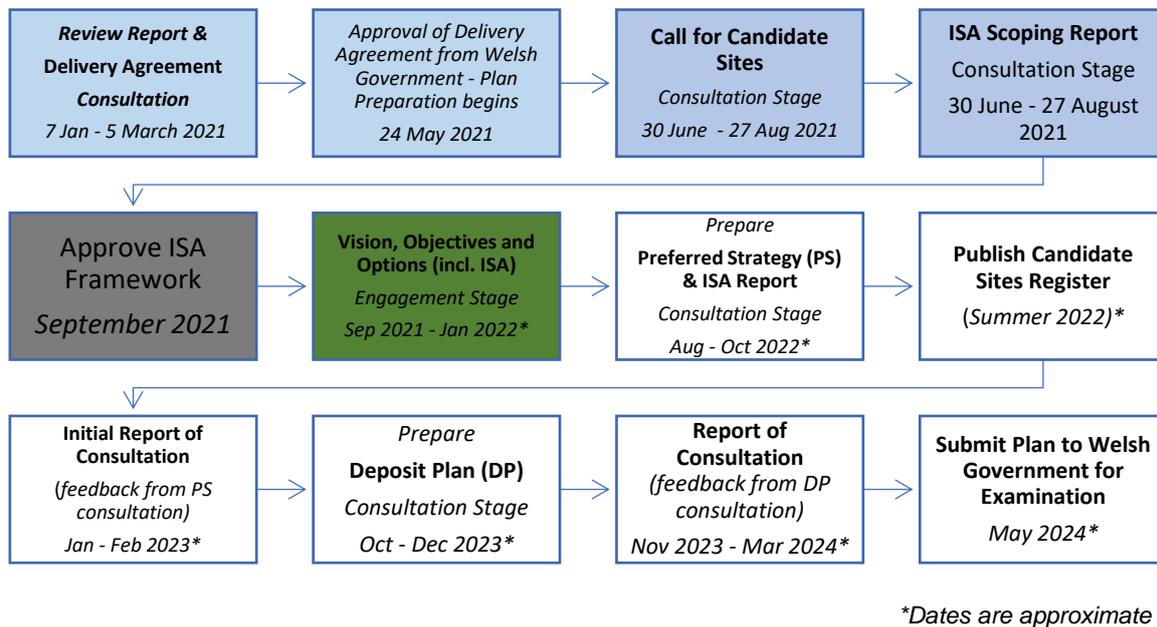
This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Executive
- Head of Finance
- Head of Law and Standards
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation

Signed

Background

There are many formal stages to the preparation of a RLDP and these key stages are set out below:



We are currently at the stage highlighted in green – ‘Vision, Objectives and Options’.

Consultation Document

The [draft Vision, Issues and Objectives](#) of the Newport Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) were made available for public consultation from 31 January - 25 March 2022.

A Vision needs to articulate the overall aim of the RLDP and set out our aspirations of how Newport will change over the plan period (2021- 2036). The Objectives sit below the Vision and are developed from the key economic, social, environmental and cultural issues identified in Newport. The Objectives need to be deliverable and add detail to the vision. When read collectively, the Vision and Objectives should set a clear context for the RLDP’s strategy.

Stakeholder Engagement and Events

Stakeholder engagement is a critical element of the preparation of any Development Plan. Therefore, in addition to the standard formal consultation (direct communication with those on the RLDP database and updates to the Council website) a series of engagement events were undertaken by Planning Aid Wales on behalf of the Council.

There were 10 events in total (online and in person) and their broad purpose was to raise awareness and to encourage understanding of the RLDP process and the Vision, Issues and Objective consultation. Targeted stakeholder groups (e.g., Community Councils, Gypsy and Traveller Groups, Heritage and Cultural groups, Developers and Consultants, Environmental and Rural Groups) were invited to participate in online events as well as three in person public events at hubs across the city. The events were generally well received and found to be useful.

Consultation Feedback and Response

The Council received 33 formal written responses, each of the responses received are set out in full, alongside the recommended Council response to the comments, in Appendix B of this report.

There were no fundamental concerns raised by the consultation therefore no significant changes are proposed.

In summary, the formal written responses raised the following key matters. The text in bold is the recommended Council response:

- Overall the responses were supportive of the Vision and Objectives, **The positive feedback received is welcomed and there is a general consensus for the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives.**
- A few responses noted the need for more ambition to the wording to reflect Newport's role as a national growth area and as a gateway to Wales. **It is believed that the vision as currently drafted appropriately captures the ambition and Newport's strategic role as a National Growth Area.**
- One response noted the need for a more overt and simple format to the work, requiring more specificity and ability to measure their success. In addition, there were conflicting views on the wording being too generic and opposing views that the wording was adequate. **The format and wording was carefully considered to allow the reader to understand not only the Vision and Objectives but those topics and questions the RLDP would need to consider in future stages in more detail, including the need to measure the success of the plan as a whole.**
- A statutory consultee welcomed the general approach and provided some minor amendments to wording to ensure the role of the natural environment is better reflected. **Some of the suggested text amendments are supported to ensure the wording reflects the role of the natural environment in delivering sustainable developments.**
- A few respondents stated the need for the objectives to provide flexible and innovative ways of meeting economic ambitions, and to note the link between delivery of new homes and creation of jobs. **The Economy and Employment Objective is considered to appropriately recognise the flexibility required to adapt to change and meet the needs of Newport.**
- A few respondents stated the need for the objectives to meet peoples housing needs and ensuring provision of affordable and sustainable new homes across a range of tenures should be explicitly stated as part of the vision. **The vision and objectives as currently drafted are considered to recognise the importance of meeting housing delivery need within the overall aim of ensuring sustainable development. The specified level of growth will be explored in further detail as part of the Growth and Spatial Options stage.**
- Specific environmental issues were noted for consideration in the RLDP including air quality, flood risk, landscape (Gwent Levels), minerals and natural resource supply, more active travel routes, city centre improvements, tourist opportunities and protection of heritage. **These topics have been considered in the Vision and Objectives work. It is recognised that the Vision and Objectives are set at a strategic level and that the plan will need to consider the local impact of such factors as the RLDP progresses.**
- A response noted the need for the Vision Issues and Objectives to reflect the placemaking objectives of national planning policy. **It is considered that the placemaking agenda has been clearly reflected in the proposals.**

We fully appreciate the time taken by those providing feedback and attending events at this early stage of the process. Many stakeholders have taken the opportunity to provide a variety of information, proposed policy topics and site designation information, offered partnership working and raised queries over the scope of the Plan. It is recognised that this goes beyond the current consultation stage and we shall consider the points raised at the appropriate stage of the RLDP preparation process.

The engagement events undertaken by Planning Aid Wales (PAW) gave the opportunity for attendees to learn about the RLDP process, specifically the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives. Many useful issues and comments were made e.g. need to upskill workforce, impact of in-migration and meeting housing needs, the future role of villages, access to facilities and infrastructure needs, protection of green spaces, the role of rural economy and the importance of climate change impact. Detailed notes were taken at each event to collate the key issues raised, and these will be considered where relevant in the preparation of the RLDP. PAW have provided a report outlining the events and feedback received, a summary is also provided. These can be viewed in Appendix B of this report.

Recommendations

This engagement process has enabled the Council to gain consensus on the draft Vision, Issues and Objectives which will set a strategic direction for the Plan. The feedback has resulted in four proposed amendments to the wording of the Vision and various objectives, details of the proposed changes are set out in full in Appendix C. Taking into account the feedback the proposed Vision for the Newport Replacement Local Development Plan is:

Proposed RLDP Vision

Newport will be a destination where people will want to live, work and visit:

- A strategically significant City which will contribute towards the national growth of Wales.
- A City that tackles inequality through sustainable patterns of development, creating places and communities that are safe, connected, inclusive, healthy, and well designed with access to housing, jobs and services and the natural environment.
- A City that promotes and protects its historic assets, diverse cultures and languages.
- An economically thriving City which supports and attracts business and industry at all scales, particularly where they focus on sustainable, innovative and technologically leading practices, which contribute towards cultivating a skilled and adaptable workforce.
- A resilient City which sustainably manages its natural resources, protecting and enhancing the biological and ecological values of the natural environment, including the benefits of ecosystem services, in a carbon neutral and climate responsible manner.

Next Steps

This engagement process has started the conversation and provided useful feedback not only on the current consultation but identified other matters which will need to be considered during the preparation of the plan as a whole. We particularly recognise and welcome the offer for continued conversations and joint working.

The next step in plan preparation is to engage with stakeholders on the potential growth and spatial options for the RLDP. In summary, this will seek to set out the level of housing and employment land provision the RLDP will need to deliver and the broad location for this development. A report will identify the Council's preferred growth and spatial options that are considered best to address Newport's key issues/challenges and meet the RLDP objectives. All this work will be achieved through engagement and consultation with the residents, communities and key stakeholders.

The Growth and Spatial Options stages will be assessed against the endorsed Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) framework to ensure alternatives have been considered and the best sustainable strategy has been selected.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

The RLDP process has a project specific budget to cover costs of all resources associated, including additional staff, consultations, commissions, examination processes etc. The resources required for the RLDP process are set out in the Delivery Agreement. The table below sets out an estimated cost for the RLDP which has been based on the previous LDP and neighbouring authority costs. The table identifies a potential residual sum remaining at the end of RLDP process, however it should be noted that the estimates used are on the cautious side. We will continue to monitor and mitigate as the plan review progresses.

	Year 1 (Start RLDP 2021/22) Actual £	Year 2 2022/23 £	Year 3 2023/24 £	Year 4 2024/25 £	Notes including budgets heads affected
Costs	189,562	280,000	250,000	250,000	Costs include estimated additional staff resource on fixed term contracts which will need to be subject to a business case.
Funded by:					
Revenue Budget	71,604	71,604	71,604	71,604	
LDP Reserve	117,958	208,400	178,396	133,800	
Net Costs	0	0	0	0	
(Savings)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	
Net Impact on Budget	0	0	0	0	
LDP Reserve (£569,558 2022/23)	569,558	361,000	182,000	48,200	

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Not approving the recommended responses	M	L	The Council has signed up to the RLDP process, which includes the Vision, Issues and Objectives. This is the second LDP for Newport and the process is established and understood. Not approving this stage will result in a delay in delivering the RLDP, contrary to the delivery agreement approved by Welsh Government.	Planning Policy Manager

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Local Development Plan is one of the statutory plans the Council has to prepare. The current LDP determines Newport's land use policies to 2026. The LDP covers many topics that impact on other sections of the Council e.g. drainage, tourism, education etc. A RLDP will consider any new Council policy, strategy or priority and its impact on the policy framework for the Council and this is explained in the draft Review Report. Since the LDP's adoption in 2015 there have been a number of significant changes to Council policy which will be of relevance to the RLDP, particularly the Corporate Plan and the Well-Being Plan for Newport. The primary objective of the Corporate Plan is 'improving people's lives' and whilst this is not at odds with the aims of the current LDP, a new LDP will help us to better align the

four commitments; Resilient Communities, Thriving Cities, Modernised Council; and Aspirational People within the strategy. As a key document outlining the issues and aspirations of the Council this needs to be reflected in a revised LDP. In addition, there are numerous Council strategies and policies that will influence the LDP e.g. Flood Risk Strategy, Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Destination Management Strategy, Economic Growth Plan etc. The Vision, Issues and Objectives work has been informed by current Council policies and priorities and has identified those key issues/themes that the replacement plan will need to consider, including the well-being duty. This approach seeks to ensure the plan maximises its contribution to sustainable development.

Options Available and considered

- 1) Note the consultation comments received and endorse the recommended Council response and proposed changes to the Vision, Issues and Objectives.
- 2) Note the consultation comments received and amend the recommended Council response and proposed changes to the Vision, Issues and Objectives.
- 3) Note the consultation comments received and not endorse the recommended response and proposed changes to the Vision, Issues and Objectives.

Preferred Option and Why

1) To note the consultation comments received and endorse the recommended Council response and proposed changes to the Vision, Issues and Objectives. The recommended changes to the Vision and Objectives, as a result of public consultation, will be reflected in the future stages of the plan. This option will ensure that the RLDP builds from a basis of consensus of the key areas to focus plan preparation upon and will confirm the Vision and Objectives for which the RLDP will aim to achieve.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The work associated with reviewing the Local Development Plan is funded via a base budget allocation, which is supplemented by an earmarked reserve in years where costs exceed the budget available. In years where there is less activity, any underspends against the base budget are transferred to the reserve, which enables the financial impact to be smoothed over a period of time. This also enables the base budget allocation to remain stable over time.

The financial summary contained within this report outlines the potential for a surplus balance to remain at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. However, it is also noted that the cost estimates are potentially conservative. Should costs ultimately exceed available resources, it will be necessary for this to be managed within the overall Regeneration & Economic Development revenue budget in the year in question. Because of the risk that the reserve balance may ultimately prove to be insufficient, any opportunities in the intervening years to bolster the reserve from available underspends with Regeneration & Economic Development should be considered.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The proposed action is in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015). In May 2021 full Council, sitting as the local planning authority, approved and adopted the revised Review Report and Delivery Agreement following public consultation and agreed to their submission to Welsh Government, in order to trigger the commencement of the LDP review process. Cabinet are now being asked to agree to the next stages of the review process. There is a statutory requirement under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 and Section 39 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) to be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA). The purpose of the ISA is to assess the extent to which the emerging policies will help achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The ISA scoping report, which sets out the sustainability appraisal issues and objectives/criteria against which the RLDP strategy, policies and proposals will be assessed, was approved by Cabinet in November 2021, together with the ISA

assessment framework. Cabinet also authorised officers to engage with key stakeholders to develop the Vision, Objectives and growth options. This consultation process with key stakeholders was facilitated by Planning Aid Wales and the outcome of the consultation is set out in the report. There were no fundamental objections to the proposed Visions, Objectives and Growth options but the consultation feedback has resulted in four proposed amendments to the wording as set out in Appendix C to the report. Cabinet are now requested to note the consultation comments, endorse the recommended responses and proposed changes and agree to the Vision, Issues and Objectives as the basis for moving to the next stage of the RLDP process. The final RLDP will be a policy framework document that will need to be approved and adopted by full Council, but Cabinet are able to approve the Vision, Issues and Objectives.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

From an HR perspective, there are no staffing implications to this report.

Stakeholder engagement is a critical element of the preparation of any Development Plan. The report writer has detailed how the ISA process encompasses and therefore meets the sustainable development principle and as part of the Replacement LDP work an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal is undertaken. The Objectives sit below the Vision and are developed from the key economic, social, environmental and cultural issues identified in Newport.

Scrutiny Committees

None

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

As part of the Replacement LDP work an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal is undertaken. This fulfils the requirements and duties for:

- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA),
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA),
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA),
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA), and
- Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG).

The aim of the ISA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts and maximising positive impacts. By undertaking this process, the Council can be confident that the replacement LDP will be prepared in a manner which clearly considers its impact on these aspects of fairness and equality. The engagement of the Vision, Issue and Objectives is undertaken in line with the agreed Community Involvement Scheme (set out the in approved Delivery Agreement) as approved by Full Council and Welsh Government.

An FEIA has not been undertaken for this specific piece of work as the RLDP process effectively incorporates an FEIA within its ISA process. In terms of the Well-being and Future Generations Act, there is a specific 'health and wellbeing' objective. Every policy/site introduced by the RLDP will need to consider how it will improve the health and wellbeing of residents within Newport and there are five more detailed questions that will need to be addressed.

Similarly with the Equality Act, socio-economic duty and Welsh language measures, the Vision, Issues and Objectives as informed by the ISA framework includes an objective entitled 'Equality, diversity and inclusion'. The objectives are explicit about the role of the plan is achieving this.

In summary, the RLDP has a system of Integrated Sustainability Appraisal work that will go beyond that of an FEIA. Consequently, it is not considered necessary to undertake an FEIA in relation to this specific report.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the scoping report or ISA framework. One of the objectives of sustainable development guided by the ISA process will be to ensure that places are secure and safe.

Consultation

The draft Vision, Issues and Objectives report was subject to an 8 week consultation from 31 January - 25 March 2022. The responses are set out in full in Appendix A of this report.

Background Papers

Draft Vision, Issues and Objectives

<https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Planning-Documents/Replacement-Local-Development-Plan-2021/Draft-Vision-Issues-Objectives-Document-English.pdf>

RLDP Delivery Agreement, including Community Involvement Scheme:

<https://www.newport.gov.uk/documents/Planning-Documents/Replacement-Local-Development-Plan-2021/LDP-Delivery-Agreement-Final-25MARC21ENG.pdf>