

Open

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

6pm
Thursday 11 January 2024
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor N Martin
Vice-Chairman: Councillor F M Oborski MBE

Councillor V Caulfield

Councillor N J Desmond

Councillor N Gale

Councillor D Little

Councillor D Russell

Councillor G Connolly

Councillor H E Dyke

Councillor P Harrison

Councillor C Rogers

Councillor L Whitehouse

Would Members please note that, to ensure continuity in scrutiny, substitutes should only be appointed for the Scrutiny Committee in exceptional circumstances.

Information for Members of the Public:

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of "Exempt Information" for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Disclosure of Interests

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider in ADVANCE of each meeting whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer or other legal officer in good time before the meeting.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting.

Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted an advance dispensation.

Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the MEMBER to decide whether disclosure is required. Again please ensure you have spoken in ADVANCE to the relevant legal officer and determined whether it is appropriate to declare the NRI and leave.

Co-opted Members

Scrutiny Committees may wish to appoint Co-Opted Members to sit on their committee in order to add value to the scrutiny process. To appoint a Co-Opted Member, a Committee must first agree to appoint either a specific person or to approach a relevant organisation to request that they put forward a suitable representative (e.g. the

local Police Authority). Co-Optees are non voting by default but Committees can decide to appoint voting rights to a Co-Optee. The Co-Option of the Member will last no longer than the remainder of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committees can at any meeting agree to terminate the Co-Option of a Co-Opted Member with immediate effect. Where an organisation is appointed to put forward a Co-Opted Member, they are able to send a substitute in exceptional circumstances, provided that they notify Democratic Services in advance. Co-Opted Members must sign up to the Members Code of Conduct before attending their first meeting, failure to sign will mean that they are unable to participate. This also applies to substitute Co-Opted Members, who will need to allow sufficient time before a meeting in order to sign the Code of Conduct.

The following will apply:

- i) The total number of voting co-opted members on any Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 25% at any one time.
- ii) The total number of voting Co-opted Members on any Review Panel will not be limited.
- iii) Those Co-opted Members with voting rights will exercise their rights in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in the constitution.

For Further information:

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, you should contact Karen Morton, Assistant Committee Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email committee.services@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Wyre Forest District Council
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 11 January 2024

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 7 December 2023.	6
5.	Wyre Forest District Council Local Development Scheme To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth that presents the updated Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) Local Development Scheme (LDS).	9
6.	Review of Statement of Community Involvement To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth that presents the draft Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and asks Cabinet to agree that it be consulted upon.	20
7.	Work Programme To review the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.	49

8.	<p>Press Involvement</p> <p>To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.</p>	
9.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	
10.	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p>	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

11.	<p>Acquisition of Property in Kidderminster</p> <p>To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) that seeks Cabinet’s agreement to proceed with purchase of a property in Kidderminster in order to deliver the project that is being funded from the Government’s £17.9m Levelling Up Fund (LUF) grant.</p>	
12.	<p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p>	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2023 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: N Martin (Chairman), F M Oborski MBE (Vice-Chairman), V Caulfield, G Connolly, N J Desmond, P Dyke, N Gale, P Harrison, D Little, C Rogers, D Russell and L Whitehouse.

Observers

Councillors: B Brookes, J F Byng, I Hardiman, M J Hart, D Morehead, D Ross and A Sutton.

OS.42 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H E Dyke.

OS.43 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor P Dyke was a substitute for Councillor H E Dyke.

OS.44 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.45 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice Chairman.

OS.46 Wyre Forest Health Action Plan Update

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth, which provided members with an update on action to improve health and wellbeing and tackle health inequalities in Wyre Forest. It included the Wyre Forest Health Action Plan for 2024-25 for endorsement.

The Principal Health and Sustainability Officer presented the report, the Committee discussed the details and the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer and the Head of Strategic Growth provided responses to queries raised by members.

Recommendation: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the information in the report and recommend to Cabinet to:

1.1 APPROVE the Wyre Forest Health Action Plan 2024-25, on the basis that further detailed performance measures are provided after 12 months to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Action Plan.

Councillor Marcus Hart joined the meeting at 6.04pm.

Councillor David Ross joined the meeting at 6.08pm.

OS.47 Climate Change Action Plan Update and Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan 2024 - 27

The Committee received a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth to update them on action to tackle climate change and reduce carbon emissions. It included the new Wyre Forest Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan for 2024 - 27 and year one action plan for endorsement.

The Principal Health and Sustainability Officer presented the report, the Committee thoroughly scrutinised it and were given the opportunity to ask questions to which the Head of Strategic Growth and Principal Health and Sustainability Officer were able to provide verbal responses.

Recommendation: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the information in the report and recommend to Cabinet to:

- 2.1 CONSIDER the update of the Climate Change Action Plan 2022-23.**
- 2.2 APPROVE the new Wyre Forest Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan and accompanying action plan for delivery of this.**
- 2.3 To delegate to the Head of Strategic Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda, to make minor amendments and updates to the Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan 2024 – 2027,**
- 2.4 The Plan to be presented to and reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months' time.**

OS.48 Cost of Living Action Plan Update

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth, which provided Members with an update on action to tackle the cost-of-living crisis. It included the Wyre Forest Cost of Living action plan for 2024/25 for endorsement.

The Committee scrutinised the report, which was presented by the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer and members asked questions to which the Head of Strategic Growth and Principal Health and Sustainability Officer gave verbal responses.

Recommendation: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the information in the report and recommend to Cabinet to:

- 2.1 NOTE the update on delivery of the Cost-of-Living Action Plan 2022-23.**
- 2.2 APPROVE the Cost-of-Living Action Plan 2024-25.**
- 2.3 update Overview and Scrutiny on progress after the next Cost of Living Summit.**

Councillor Ben Brookes left the meeting at 7.00pm

Councillor David Ross left the meeting at 7.03pm

OS.49 Work Programme

The published Work Programme 2023-24 for the rest of the municipal year was received by the Committee and the items for January were noted. A query was raised about whether the Capital Portfolio Strategy and performance should be reinstated on the Work Programme and the Chairman agreed to take the proposal on board.

OS.50 Press Involvement

There were no further items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, meeting ended at 7.05pm.

Report of: Helen Hawkes

Date

11/01/2024

Open/Exempt

Open

Agenda Item No. 5 - Local Development Scheme

Summary

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 13 February 2024.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

Officer contact details

Name: Heather Stone

Title: Principal Planning Policy Officer

Contact number: 2520

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET REPORT
13 February 2024

Wyre Forest District Council Local Development Scheme

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Dan Morehead, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Kate Bailey, Head of Strategic Growth
CONTACT OFFICER:	Heather Stone, Principal Planning Policy Officer
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1: WFDC Local Development Scheme

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the updated Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) Local Development Scheme (LDS)

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Cabinet is invited to AGREE:

the adoption of the revised Local Development Scheme.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme (LDS) under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). The LDS must specify the documents which make up the Local Development Documents (LDDs) for the area. For Wyre Forest the Development Plan Documents are the Local Plan and any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). This LDS sets out the timetable for the production of the LDDs which will be produced by WFDC over a three year period (2023-2026).

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The LDS sets out the timetable for the production of a number of Supplementary Planning Documents as listed in Appendix b of the Adopted Local Plan. Some of these are completely new SPDs such as the Health and Wellbeing SPD (recently adopted) and a Green Infrastructure SPD (now renamed as Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure SPD), others such as the Planning Obligations SPD, Affordable Housing SPD and the Design Guidance SPD are being completely reviewed and updated to reflect changes in both national and local policy.

- 4.2 In addition to the production of these SPDs, a number of Conservation Area Character Appraisals are also being reviewed and updated starting with those for Stourport No.1 and Stourport No.2. All of these documents will be available for public consultation prior to their adoption.
- 4.3 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023. The Act aims to streamline the local-plan making process. A new set of national development management policies will also be introduced to cover common planning consideration such as Green Belt and flood risk. Most of the sections in the Act which relate to plan making and development management will require secondary legislation. The next Local Plan for Wyre Forest will be very different with its content limited to allocating land for development, infrastructure requirements and principles of good design.
- 4.4 The council is required by statute to review the Local Plan every five years. It may be necessary to review strategic policies earlier but only where there are significant changes in the circumstances such as where housing numbers are insufficient or relevant changes to national policy that have a significant impact on the district. Work is not expected to start on any 'new-look' Local Plan until 2026/27 subject to any changes in the NPPF. By that date, all of the legislative changes arising from the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act should have been enacted with both the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Policy Guidance fully updated.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Costs incurred will be in officer time in progressing the documents set out in this Local Development Scheme to adoption and will be met from existing budgets.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Adoption of the Local Development Scheme would meet the statutory requirement under s15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).
- 6.2 It is necessary to introduce or update the policy documents to reflect current national and local policy.

7. IMPACT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Not applicable to the LDS. Assessments in respect of each document to be adopted will be considered individually.
- 7.2 Health and Wellbeing impact – Not applicable.
- 7.3 Climate Change impact – Not applicable.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 An updated LDS is a legal requirement.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 A revised LDS is required to provide certainty about the production of policy documents as set out in the adopted Local Plan and is required by statute. A replacement is needed to the current LDS to reflect changes to local and national policy.

9.2 This LDS reflects the key pieces of work for the planning policy officers in the next three years including the Housing, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure supplementary planning documents and the Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 CLT

10.2 Planning Manager

10.3 Principal Solicitor

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Not applicable



**Wyre Forest District Local
Development Scheme
2024-2026**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wyre Forest District Council is required by Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is a project plan which sets out the Local Planning Authority’s timetable over a three year period for preparing documents which form part of its Development Plan as well as other supplementary planning documents.
- 1.2 The LDS informs communities and other interested parties of the process and progress in preparing planning policy documents. Further information on community engagement in the planning process is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is available on the website www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk.
- 1.3 This LDS covers the period 2023-26. It will be kept under review to reflect any changes to planning legislation or policy-related matters.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR WYRE FOREST

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance sets out the government's planning policies and advice for England. They provide a framework within which Development Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents are prepared.
- 2.2 The Development Plan Documents for Wyre Forest are shown in the table below:

Document Title	Date Adopted
Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036)	April 2022
Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy Local Plan (2012-2027)	November 2012
Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan (2018-2036)	July 2022
Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan (2022-2036)	April 2023
Churchill & Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2026)	July 2017

- 2.3 A further 3 Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been formally designated, these are shown in the table below:

Parish – area covered	Date Designated
Bewdley – whole parish	June 2015
Upper Arley – whole parish	July 2015
Cookley & Caunsall (Eastern part of Wolverley & Cookley Parish)	September 2018

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

- 2.4 The Wyre Forest District Local Plan was adopted in April 2022 and covers the period 2016-2036. This covers the whole district and replaces the Core Strategy (2010), the Site Allocations & Policies Local Plan (2013) and the Kidderminster Action Plan

(2013). It addresses the district's needs and opportunities for housing, employment, community facilities, the built and natural environment and infrastructure. The accompanying Policies Map shows the location of the various designations and site allocations. Under current Government policy, the Local Plan needs to be reviewed at least every 5 years. As of April 2023, Wyre Forest District Council was able to demonstrate over 10 years housing land supply and therefore unless the planning legislation is amended to require an earlier review, no work on a review of the Local Plan is timetabled during this LDS.

- 2.5 The Government have recently consulted on changes to the NPPF which will affect the requirements for future Local Plans. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act aims to streamline the local plan-making process. A new set of national development management policies will also be introduced to cover common planning consideration such as Design, Green Belt and Flood Risk. Most of the sections in the Act which relate to plan making and development management will require secondary legislation.
- 2.6 The Minerals and Waste Documents are the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council and work is being progressed on a Minerals Site Allocations DPD. Further information can be found on the County Council's website: www.worcestershire.gov.uk
- 2.7 With the adoption of the Local Plan (2016-2036), the focus of the Planning Policy section is now moving to the implementation of the Local Plan. Several Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are being prepared to assist with the interpretation of policies contained within the Local Plan.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

- 2.8 Neighbourhood Plans provides communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their local area and to shape its development and growth. The Local Planning Authority provides advice to communities that are preparing Neighbourhood Plans to ensure they are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.9 Bewdley have set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (established in 2015) and they have carried out public consultation and produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan (2020). This is now being revisited in the light of the adoption of the Wyre Forest Local Plan. A decision will be taken in 2024 as to whether to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan for the town of Bewdley.

3 SUPPORTING PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 Supplementary Planning Documents add further detail to Local Plan policies and provide guidance on particular sites or issues. The Local Planning Authority will consult on draft Supplementary Planning Documents for 6 weeks and then will consider representations received and finalise the SPD before it is adopted by Cabinet.

3.2 Once adopted, an SPD can be a material consideration in decision-making and should be taken into account in deciding planning applications or appeals. There are several SPDs currently being prepared or have been recently adopted, these are:

3.3 Health and Wellbeing SPD – Adopted July 2023

This SPD provides more detailed advice on the health and wellbeing related policies in the Local Plan. It was prepared in partnership with Worcestershire County Council’s Strategic Planning Team and the Public Health Team. It sets out how developers will be expected to demonstrate that their proposals reflect health and wellbeing principles through the use of Health Impact Assessments.

3.5 Housing SPD

This SPD was consulted on for 6 weeks during November/December 2023. Adoption is expected early in 2024. This document will support the implementation of policies in the Adopted Local Plan relating to housing, provide guidance to help with the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, inform pre-application advice on housing development and be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It has been prepared in partnership with Development Management and Housing colleagues.

3.6 Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD

The Design Guidance SPD (June 2015) is being fully updated to reflect changes to both National and Local Planning policy. This document will also include a section on shop front design, which will replace the 2004 SPG on Shop Front Design Guidance within the Historic Environment.

3.7 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure SPD

This is a new SPD which will provide guidance on the implementation of the Environment Act 2021 and further detail on Policies SP.23 and SP.28 of the Adopted Local Plan.

3.8 Planning Obligations SPD

The Planning Obligations SPD 2016 will be updated to reflect changes in national and local planning policy.

3.9 The following table sets out the timetable to produce Supplementary Planning Documents over the next 3 years.

Document title	Committee cycle	Consultation	Adoption of SPD
Housing SPD	October 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	February 2024
Design, Amenity and Shopfronts SPD	early 2024	Spring 2024	Summer 2024
Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure SPD	Spring 2024	Early summer 2024	Adoption late summer 2024
Planning Obligations SPD	Summer 2024	Late summer 2024	Autumn 2024

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS

3.10 Conservation Area Character Appraisals – Appraisals for Stourport No.1 and Stourport No.2 are currently being redrafted to bring them up to date to reflect changes on the ground and with planning policy. They are due to be consulted on in early 2024. Following this, Character Appraisals for Gilgal and Bewdley will then be revised and updated.

Document Title	Committee Cycle	Consultation	Adoption
Stourport No.1 CACA	Early 2024	Early 2024	Late Spring 2024
Stourport No.2	Early 2024	Early 2024	Late Spring 2024
Gilgal	Autumn 2024	Autumn 2024	Winter 2024
Bewdley	Autumn 2025	Autumn 2025	Winter 2025
Churchill	Autumn 2026	Autumn 2026	Winter 2026

BROWNFIELD LAND REGISTER

3.11 The LPA is required to prepare, maintain and publish a register of previously developed (brownfield) land which is suitable for residential development. The register is made up of sites which have been assessed as having potential for residential redevelopment. The Brownfield Land Register is published on the Council’s website and reviewed at least annually to include new sites and make amendments to the details on existing sites, for example where redevelopment has started. There is no requirement to consult on sites proposed for inclusion on the register.

SELF-BUILD AND CUSTOM-BUILD REGISTER

3.12 The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on the local authorities to keep and regard to a register of people who are interested in self-build or custom-build projects in their area. Self-build or custom-build housing is built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing.

3.13 An online registration form is available on the website. Information from the register helps to gauge the level of demand for such plots in Wyre Forest District. The LPA will use this information to try to match applicants with suitable plots but there is no guarantee.

AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

3.14 The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is published on an annual basis. The AMR includes the following:

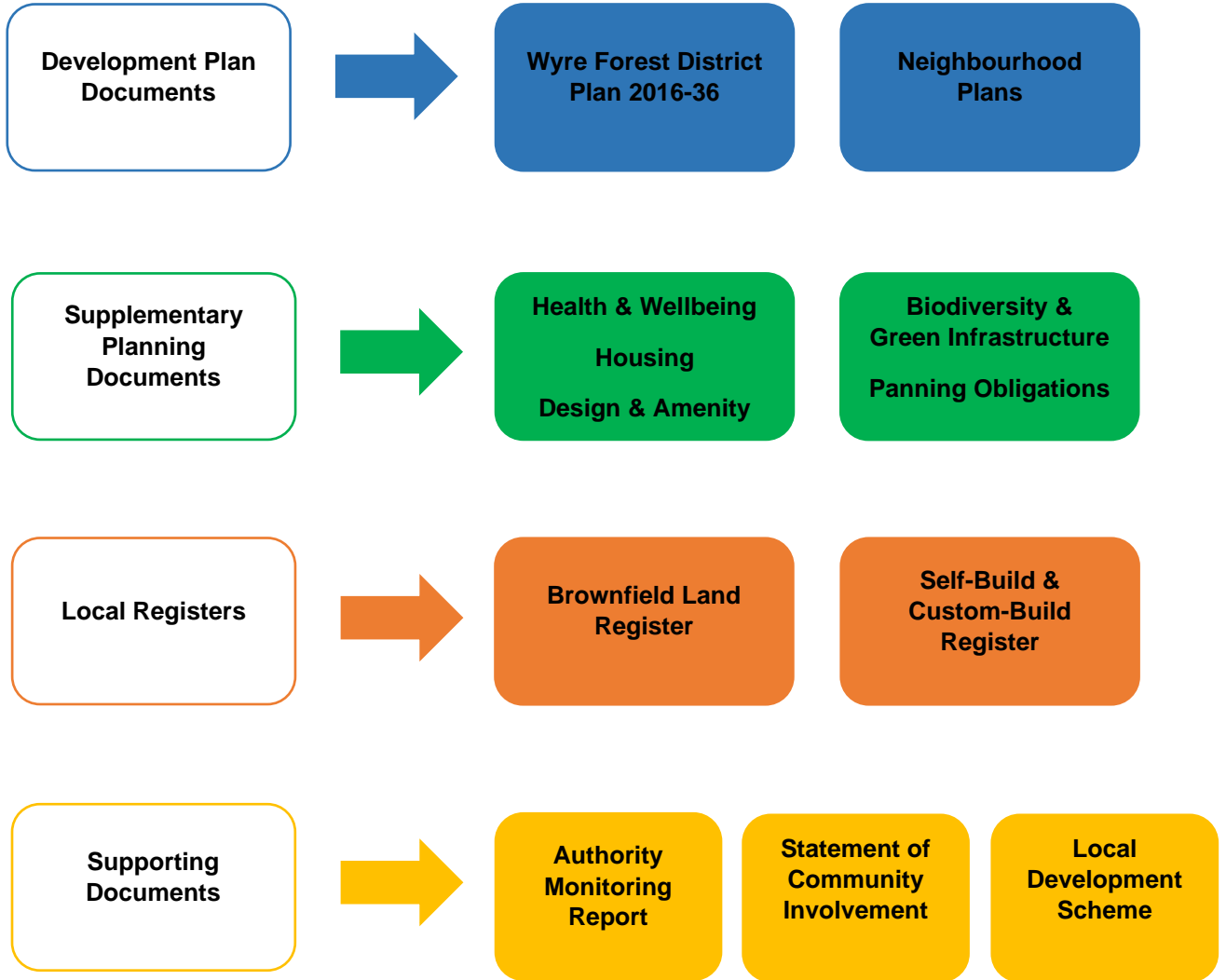
- Progress towards the preparation of documents outlined in the LDS
- Progress towards the delivery of net additional market and affordable dwellings
- Progress towards the delivery of employment land
- Details of any policy documents that have been adopted or approved
- Details of any Local Plan policies not being implemented and reasons why
- Details of any Neighbourhood Plans that have been ‘made’

The AMR can help inform whether there is a need to undertake a partial or full update of the Local Plan. The latest published AMR is available on the website.

4 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF LDS

4.1 The Local Planning Authority will keep the LDS under review.

5 PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENT STRUCTURE



Report of: Helen Hawkes

Date

11/01/2024

Open/Exempt

Open

Agenda Item No. 6 – Review of Statement of Community Involvement

Summary

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 13 February 2024.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

Officer contact details

Name: Heather Stone

Title: Principal Planning Policy Officer

Contact number: 2520

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
13 February 2024

Review of Statement of Community Involvement

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Dan Morehead, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Green Agenda
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Kate Bailey, Head of Strategic Growth
CONTACT OFFICER:	Heather Stone, Principal Planning Policy Officer
APPENDICES:	Appendix one: WFDC Statement of Community Involvement

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and to agree that it be consulted upon.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Cabinet is invited to **agree** that a six week public consultation on the revised draft Statement of Community Involvement be undertaken.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Wyre Forest District Council's first Statement of Community Involvement was produced in May 2006 and updated in February 2013 as there had been a number of changes to planning policy and legislation. These were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The SCI was partially updated in 2020 in response to updated government regulations (April 2020) as a result of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), Local Authorities are required to review their SCI every 5 years.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The planning system affects everybody who lives, works or visits the district. It balances competing land uses and sets out the vision for how communities will be enhanced. Local communities, businesses and other organisations can contribute to this process through engagement in the planning process and thereby help to shape their environment.
- 4.2 The draft SCI updates the adopted SCI from February 2013 (amended 2020) and takes into account - although there is no legal requirement to do so - the Government's Consultation Principles: Guidance 2018 which provides guidance for

Government departments on how consultations should in general be conducted. WFDC should involve people in a meaningful way by using clear, purposeful and informative consultations. The review has provided an opportunity for a complete refresh of the SCI, having regard to availability of staff and financial resources and all relevant factors including the growing shift to public engagement being focussed on social media.

- 4.3 The changes include a section on consultation (and re-consultation) on planning applications as well as a section on speaking at committee. This has been included to provide clear guidance to officers, applicants and the public about how WFDC will approach consultation during the development management process. The SCI also confirms that the Council will move to consultation being in digital format as past paper-based methods have proved ineffective and can no longer be justified on cost grounds given the Council's financial position. The approach is fully consistent with the corporate priority of securing financial sustainability and also reducing impact on the environment (for example from the printing and distribution process).
- 4.4 Whilst there are no regulations setting out how to prepare an SCI and no longer a legal requirement to consult on a draft, it is considered best practice to undertake consultation to give stakeholders and residents the opportunity to seek changes to the document.
- 4.5 It is proposed that a six-week consultation will be held between 19th February and 1st April 2024. The following measures will be taken to publicise the consultation:
- Displaying information on the District Council's website
 - Press release and social media activity
 - Providing electronic or hard copies of the consultation document in the WFDC offices and Libraries throughout the District.
- 4.6 A final version of the revised SCI will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee after the consultation period ends and it is anticipated that the revised SCI will be brought back to Cabinet with a view to adoption in summer 2024.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The costs of adopting the SCI relate to staff time. These will be met by existing budgets. The revised approach set out in the SCI will reduce future costs of consultation processes and is essential in view of the significant financial gap set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires all planning authorities to produce an SCI, setting out how they would consult communities on the various stages of preparation of planning policy and the determination of planning applications. Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 requires a planning authority to review its SCI every five years. Beyond the requirements of section 18 of the 2004 Act, there is no statutory guidance about the content of an SCI to which the Council must have regard. Considerable flexibility therefore exists in respect of the

commitments about involvement that are made in an SCI, as long as the legal requirements are met.

7. IMPACT AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and it has been found that there are no negative impacts from the SCI.
- 7.2 The SCI in itself is not expected to have any adverse impacts on climate change or health and well-being with the move to greater online digitisation of the consultation process having a positive environmental impact and the wide range of consultation methods utilised will support accessibility. Local Plan policy documents and planning applications would need to be assessed separately for any such impacts.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Local Authorities have a legal requirement to prepare and publish an SCI and review it every five years. The report is the first step in discharging the Council's statutory duties.
- 8.2 The document provides guidance to applicants, stakeholders and the community about the planning consultation process and will help to reduce demand on officer time. The proposed SCI meets all legal requirements and has been prepared taking account of extant Council policies and other relevant factors, including availability of resources.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The draft SCI is required to update the document that was last amended in 2020.
- 9.2 Although not formally required it is considered good practice to go out to consultation and therefore the report proposes a six week consultation period between 19th February and 1st April 2024.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 CLT
- 10.2 Planning Manager, WFDC
- 10.3 Principal Solicitor WFDC

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Not applicable



Wyre Forest District Council Statement of Community Involvement

HOW WE WILL INVOLVE YOU IN PLANNING MATTERS

January 2024

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1 Introduction

What is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been written to inform residents and businesses how they can engage in the plan-making process of developing and deciding planning policy and the planning process in terms of the management of new development in the District.
- 1.2 The planning system affects everybody who lives, works in or visits the district. It balances competing land uses and sets out the vision for how communities will be enhanced. Local people and businesses can contribute to this process through engaging in the planning process and thus help to shape their local area.
- 1.3 It is a statutory requirement that the local planning authority keeps local communities and key stakeholders informed about plan making, planning applications and other planning matters including how the Council will support groups undertaking neighbourhood planning.

2 Consultation Principles

- 2.1 The key aims of the SCI are:
 - To offer the widest range of opportunities to stakeholders and the community to participate in the plan making process within the resources available.
 - To comply with, and where appropriate, exceed the minimum legal requirements for stakeholder and community consultation in the planning process.
- 2.2 Therefore, the following principles will apply to all planning consultations:
 - Information will be presented in a clear and concise format using plain English and avoiding the use of technical jargon where possible.
 - Consultations will have a purpose and will be informative. Those being consulted will be given enough information to ensure that they understand issues and can give informed responses within reason.
 - The opinions of stakeholders, community groups and individuals will be valued. Where possible, changes will be made to reflect comments received, and where this is not possible, the reasons will be clearly explained where appropriate.
 - Consultation techniques which are appropriate to the subject matter and the particular consultees involved will be used.
 - The value of diversity will be recognised with equal and fair treatment of all of those involved in the consultation process.
- 2.3 The statement sets out:
 - How people will have the chance to contribute their ideas, and the process for considering and responding to these views.
 - How people will get the chance to participate in developing proposals and options.
 - How people can submit representations on formal planning proposals.
 - How the District Council will seek to provide feedback to keep the community informed on progress and outcomes.

How does the Planning System Work?

- 2.4 There are two main parts to the planning system, Planning Policy and Development Management:
- a) Planning Policy is concerned with producing the local planning documents and policies that will guide development in the district. These documents must conform to relevant Government policies and guidance and there are specific regulatory procedures which have to be followed during their preparation. The Local Plan includes strategic and site-specific policies relating to issues such as housing, employment and other land allocations and outlines where new development is expected to take place.
 - b) Development Management is responsible for processing and determining planning applications, together with works to trees, advertisements and listed buildings. The team also provides pre-application advice. The Planning Enforcement team investigates planning breaches and takes appropriate action when required.

Why are we refreshing the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 2.5 The preparation of a SCI is a legal requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (section 18) as amended by the Planning Act 2008, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. This legislation requires the Council to prepare a statement for how it will involve those with an interest in development in the area.
- 2.6 The Council recognises that there have been significant changes in the ways that the local community interacts with the District Council. Access to the internet has increased. This SCI will use online engagement as the primary method, including websites, online questionnaires, social media and email alerts. The Council's website will be regularly updated with information about the Local Plan when a review is being undertaken or other planning documents are being produced. All planning consultations will be advertised on its website with documents available to view on dedicated pages. Where appropriate, social media will be used to promote consultations with information posted on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and other social media platforms.

Monitoring and Review

- 2.7 The SCI will be kept under review and community engagement in planning will be monitored through the production of the District Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). A review of the SCI would only be considered necessary following significant changes in the legislation governing the production of planning policy, the determining of planning applications or community involvement in planning, or where the AMR identifies consistently low or declining levels of public participation in planning.
- 2.8 Should a review of the SCI become necessary, the District Council will consult on a draft and take those comments into consideration when finalising the SCI. The SCI will need to be adopted at a meeting of Council in accordance with the District Council's constitution.

3 Consultation Principles

- 3.1 The key aims of the SCI are:
- To offer the widest range of opportunities to stakeholders and the community to participate in the plan making process within the resources available.

- To comply with, and where appropriate, exceed the minimum legal requirements for stakeholder and community consultation in the planning process.

3.2 Therefore, the following principles will apply to all planning consultations:

- Information will be presented in a clear and concise format using plain English and avoiding the use of technical jargon where possible.
- Consultations will have a purpose and will be informative. Those being consulted will be given enough information to ensure that they understand issues and can give informed responses where possible.
- The opinions of stakeholders, community groups and individuals will be valued. Where possible, changes will be made to reflect comments received, and where this is not possible, the reasons will be clearly explained.
- Consultation techniques which are appropriate to the subject matter and those involved will be used.
- The value of diversity will be recognised with equal and fair treatment of all of those involved in the consultation process.
- The District Council will make every reasonable effort to ensure it engages with those groups not traditionally involved with the planning process including through representative groups or bodies.
- The public will always be involved at an early stage in the Local Plan process.
- Consultation responses will be analysed, and the outcomes reported in a clear, understandable way within a reasonable timeframe.
- Individual responses will not be sent to members of the public who submit responses to consultations.
- It may not always be possible or appropriate to decide the matter in accordance with comments received. Sometimes there may be other material considerations to adhere to such as national or local policies and legislation.
- Responses that use racist, sexist, homophobic or other offensive language or terminology will not be accepted.

Communication Methods that will be used by WFDC during consultation

3.3 Different ways of communication will suit different people and circumstances. With the use of good communication, everyone can find the information they need and will know how to get involved if they choose to. The Council is committed to moving towards more online forms of engagement whilst ensuring that everyone, including the digitally excluded, have an opportunity to get involved where appropriate.

3.4 The following table lists some pro-active approaches, as well as the more generic methods such as social media and press, utilising links with groups and organisations used by the council.

Method	Explanation
Consultation documents, paper copies	Planning documents will be available to view at WFDC offices and at public locations such as Kidderminster Library.
Website	Information about draft development plans and policies, planning applications and public consultations will be on the planning pages of the WFDC website.
Social Media	WFDC will use online platforms such as Facebook, X and LinkedIn (or their successors) to advertise consultations and

	seek feedback via online survey tools where possible
Workshops/focus groups	These will be used to consult specific groups of people, for example, statutory consultees or community groups.
Drop in events/exhibitions	These can be staffed or unstaffed drop-in events/exhibitions where people can examine documents/materials and provide comments on the information.
Emails, newsletters and letters	Consultees can be notified via relevant newsletters, such as the residents' newsletters and planning newsletter.
Meetings	These can be organised meetings or consultations via an agenda item on existing network groups. For example, a meeting specifically consulting on an SPD, or an item about the SPD consultation on a parish council agenda.
Press releases	WFDC will produce and share to local media to raise interest and participation in any consultations.
Questionnaire/Surveys	These can be conducted electronically online and /or in person. In exceptional circumstances e.g. where someone has a specific disability or is excluded from these methods, then it may be possible to use a paper form. A mix of approaches will be used to attract responses to consultation where necessary.
Online meetings via MS Teams/Zoom	Online meeting tools such as MS teams and Zoom can be used to meet with groups and people who may find it difficult to participate in other consultations events/methods.

Statutory Consultees

3.5 Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 introduced the Duty to Co-operate. This is a legal requirement for local planning authorities, National Park authorities, county councils and a number of other public organisations such as infrastructure providers, to work together and consider joint approaches to plan-making. Wyre Forest District Council will continue to work closely with neighbouring authorities and key stakeholders to deliver positive planning within the area and fulfil the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate.

3.6 There are certain organisations and bodies that the Council must ask for their opinion when preparing plan documents and / or deciding on applications. These are:

- Central, Regional and Local Government organisations
- Bodies such as utility companies
- Community, voluntary, resident and interested groups
- Individuals who have requested to be kept informed on planning policy matters
- Parish/Town Councils
- Local businesses, developers and agents
- Neighbouring authorities and relevant internal council departments

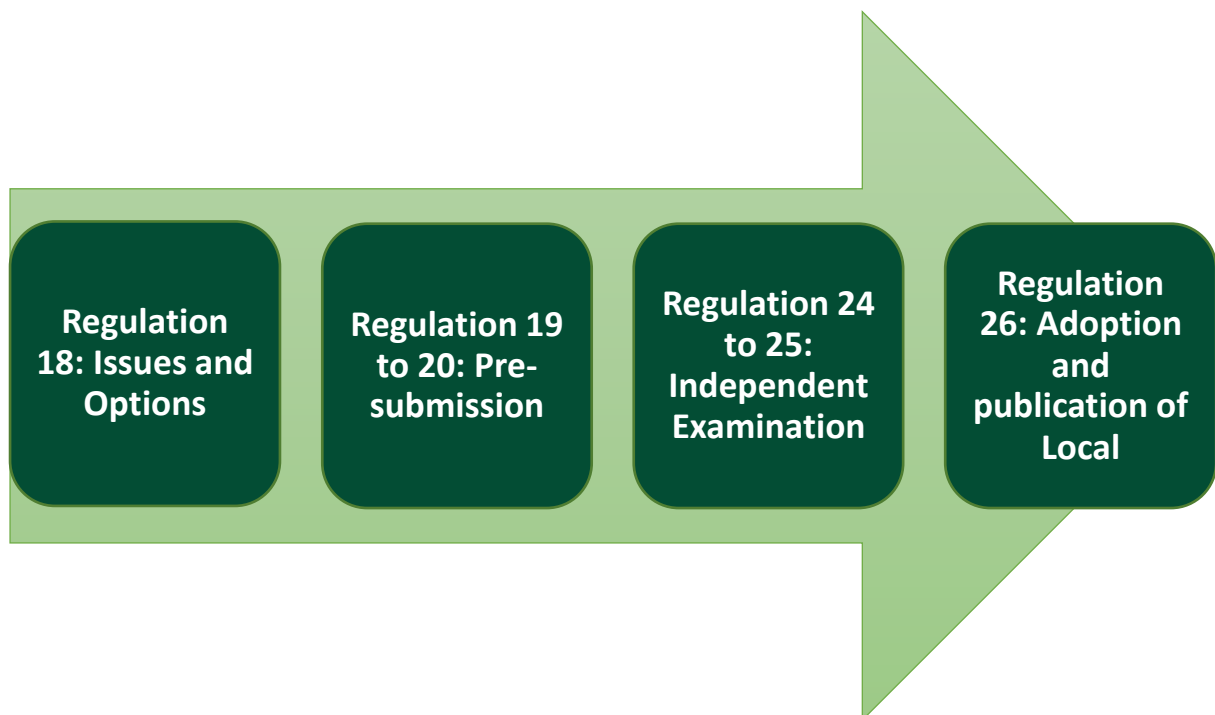
- 3.7 The groups and organisations will change over time and the planning consultation contact list will be checked regularly to keep an up-to-date list of groups, organisations and individuals to contact.

The Role of Elected Councillors

- 3.8 Elected Councillors play a key role in the planning process. Their role in planning policy includes approving development plans for consultation and their subsequent submission for Examination in Public. There are a number of committees with different powers to scrutinise plans and make decisions. In some circumstances, special panels may also be established.
- 3.9 Any document which forms part of the Local Plan must be approved by Council before it is submitted for Examination in Public or adopted.
- 3.10 Elected Members also play a key role in the development management process. The District Council's Planning Committee determine many planning applications, with some smaller applications being determined by officers under delegated powers in accordance with the Adopted Scheme of Delegation.

The Wyre Forest District Local Plan

- 3.11 The Wyre Forest District Council Local Plan is the principal statutory development plan and forms the basis for planning decision making for the district.
- 3.12 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 is the main piece of legislation that provides the minimum standards for local authorities when consulting on the local plan and supplementary planning documents.
- 3.13 The flow chart below states the process that WFDC will go through when consulting on the Local Plan.

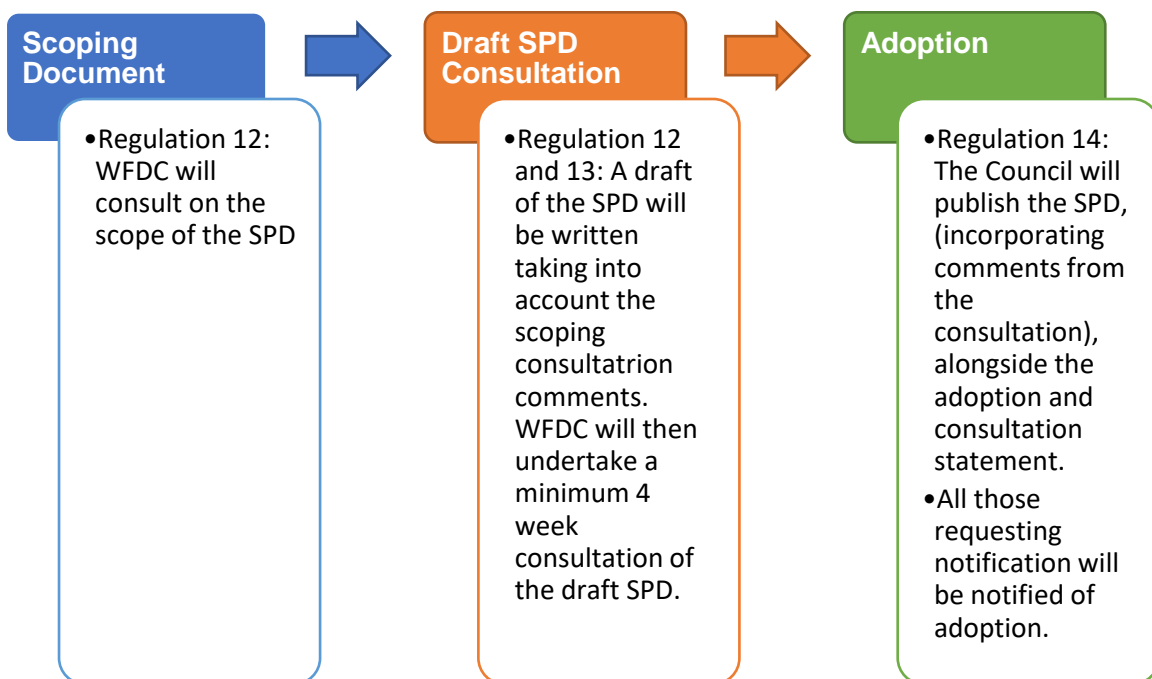


- 3.14 A detailed breakdown of the consultation process is in Appendix 1 of this document but in brief, the following consultation opportunities are detailed below.

- 3.15 **Regulation 18:** First consultation, or series of consultations (Minimum 6 weeks each) – develop/ add to the evidence base and may include the preparation of several options. Consultees will be invited to give their feedback and the preferred options identified. It may be that developers or individuals give new options not previously known about. In this case, another consultation on these options will take place.
- 3.16 **Regulation 19 to 20:** Draft document consultation (Minimum 6 weeks) – Consultees will be asked to give their feedback. Subject to there not being significant changes following the previous stage, the final document goes to the Secretary of State.
- 3.17 **Regulation 24 to 25:** The final document (known as the submission plan) is examined by an Independent Planning Inspector. There may be modifications suggested by the Inspector at this stage. These will be published and subject to public consultation. The Inspector will issue a report including any changes that must be made to the document.
- 3.18 **Regulation 26:** Adoption and publication of the final document.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.19 Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) can provide additional policy guidance on specific issues such as design, or specific sites allocated for development within the local plan. They do not have statutory status and cannot set new policy. Therefore, SPDs have fewer stages in their preparation than the local plan and they are not subject to an Examination in Public. This means they can be prepared more quickly. Despite this, community consultation is an important part of the process of preparing SPDs.
- 3.20 As with the Local Plan, the main legislation governing the consulting on SPD’s are the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The diagram below sets out the key stages:



3.21 Further details of the consultation process for the SPD consultation process can be found in Appendix 2.

Neighbourhood Plans

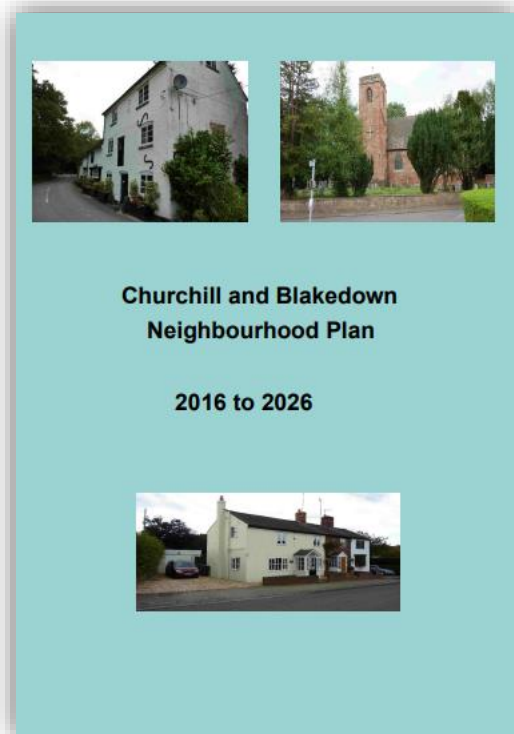
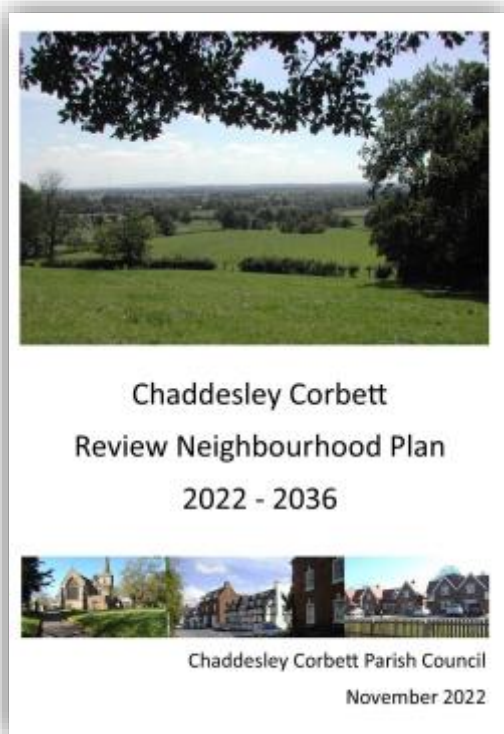
3.22 The role of Neighbourhood Plans in Planning was introduced by the Localism Act (2011) and has since been strengthened by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012), the Housing and Planning Act (2016) and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.

3.23 Neighbourhood Plans, once adopted, are statutory plans that carry equal weight to any Local Plan. It is a way for local communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work by having more of a say in where new homes, businesses, shops and community facilities should be located in their local area, along with being able to allocate sites for development. However, these plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the WFDC Local Plan and have regard to national policy.

3.24 Unlike the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans are produced by local communities themselves with the support of WFDC. The Council will guide the communities through the process ensuring that all legislative requirements are met.

3.25 Details of the different consultation stages are in Appendix 3.

3.26 Current ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans



4 Consultation on Planning Applications

- 4.1 The District Council sits within a two-tier administrative system with Worcestershire County Council overseeing a much larger area. The County Council is responsible for determining applications in relation to the working of minerals (together with the processing of minerals and other related activities), infrastructure projects and the deposit of waste materials (including treatment, storage, processing and other related activities). However, Wyre Forest District Council is responsible for all other development control functions within the District.
- 4.2 The District Council deals with a number of different types of planning applications, the three main types which are covered by the SCI being:
- **Outline** - to establish the principle of development. Outline applications can only be made for the erection of buildings and are usually used for larger sites and developments.
 - **Full** - all details need to be submitted when the application is made.
 - **Reserved Matters** - following an outline planning approval, reserved matters applications finalise the details of the development and relate to matters including design, access and layout.
- 4.3 WFDC has a scheme of delegation, which states which applications are determined by the Planning Manager and which will be determined by Planning Committee. The scheme of delegation is on the WFDC website at: [Constitution section 4 \(wyreforestdc.gov.uk\)](http://wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

Pre-Application Discussions and Early Community Involvement

- 4.4 The District Council encourages developers to enter into early dialogue with the WFDC planning team and external statutory consultees. These include:
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services
 - Worcestershire County Council
 - North Worcestershire Water Management
 - Environment Agency
 - West Mercia Police
 - Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
 - Canal and River Trust
 - Historic England
- 4.5 Pre-application discussions are confidential between the District Council and the applicant. Pre-application discussions have the following benefits:
- They help to achieve better quality applications with more chance of a successful outcome;
 - They help to identify at an early stage whether specialist input is required;
 - They ensure all the necessary drawings and information are provided to enable the application to be registered as valid; and
 - They highlight any key considerations at the beginning of the process, including whether there are any major issues with the proposal or what contributions may be required to make the proposal acceptable in policy terms.

- Where it is indicated that a proposal is completely unacceptable, this could save considerable costs in pursuing a formal application.
- 4.6 At the pre-application stage, planning officers can advise applicants as to whether or not their proposal may be sensitive and therefore require a more detailed level of community involvement.
- 4.7 Applicants will always be encouraged to consider the benefits of involving the community in developing their proposals whether it is legally required or not. The following methodologies could be adopted to involve the community:
- Public exhibitions or meetings
 - Publish Development Briefs
 - Use of websites and online tools such as Teams/Zoom meetings
 - Questionnaires and surveys
 - Site notices
- 4.8 Applicants for large developments should discuss community involvement with officers and agree the approach to public consultation. However, in order for the District Council to maintain its impartiality when determining planning applications, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to take the lead role in community engagement and to cover any costs resulting from the process. The District Council will expect applicants to provide evidence of pre-application consultation in accordance with the requirements of The Localism Act 2011. Such evidence should be set out within a consultation statement outlining what consultation has been carried out and how the results of the exercise have been incorporated into the submitted proposals. Inadequate pre-application consultation may lead to delays in processing applications as new issues emerge late in the process.

Community Involvement in Planning Application Decisions

- 4.9 Statutory consultation requirements for planning applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- 4.10 The District Council has a number of procedures currently in place to involve the community in planning application decisions and these are (depending on the application type):
- Publishing the application details on the Council’s Planning Portal and how to comment
 - Letter to the owner/occupiers of properties adjoining the application site advising of application and the period in which to submit comments, and/or
 - Publishing a notice in the local press (Kidderminster Shuttle) for certain types of development
 - Weekly list of planning applications (circulated to specific consultees and available on the Council’s website)
 - Consultation with statutory and non-statutory bodies (e.g. parish councils)
 - Following existing protocols with particular organisations (e.g. Environment Agency, Highways Authority)
- 4.11 The Planning Service is committed to both informing and engaging with the wider community and individuals in relation to planning proposals. However, there needs to

be a balance between making decisions in a timely and efficient way and providing the community with a reasonable opportunity to comment. Consultation involves not only the public but also statutory and non-statutory consultees. The scope of consultees will vary depending on the nature of the proposal, application type and location so not all bodies are consulted on every application. Statutory consultees are defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

- 4.12 Consultees to applications will have a minimum of 21 days to respond to a consultation letter and all responses should be submitted online via the Council's website. If a consultee requires an extension of time to respond then they should write or email the case officer to ask for an agreement to extend the consultee expiry date, otherwise the local planning authority has the right to determine the application after the expiry of the consultation period.
- 4.13 Comments can be submitted on any planning application within 21 days of it being registered or the date as specified in the consultation letter. Comments can be submitted online, by e-mail or in writing to the Development Management Team. You must supply your name and address for your comments to be considered.
- 4.14 Any public comments which contain defamatory remarks will be removed from public view on the Council's website, but will be made available upon written, email or FOI/SAR request.
- 4.15 No copycats or persistent repetitive comments will be accepted either by phone, writing or email prior to the application being determined and post planning committee/decision. If this occurs then the Council will consider taking appropriate action in accordance with the Council's vexatious complaints policy ([Unreasonably persistent or vexatious complaints policy | Wyre Forest District Council \(wyreforestdc.gov.uk\)](#)).

Consultation with adjoining properties

- 4.16 When an application is received, we aim to ensure the application is validated and all consultations are sent out within the first 10 days from when the date of when the application is received. This will include writing to the adjoining properties to the proposal or displaying a site notice at or near to the application site.
- 4.17 If required by The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015, a notice about the application will be published in the Kidderminster Shuttle.

Re-consultation

- 4.18 All comments received in response to consultations carried out on applications will be carefully considered and taken into account in the assessment of applications. Officers will consider the need for potential amendments to schemes where they have been suggested. If significant material changes are made to applications, re-consultation on the application will be carried out to all original consultees. Contributors who were not originally consulted on the application will not be re-consulted. If there are no significant material changes are made then no consultation will be undertaken.

Public Speaking at Planning Committee

4.19 Through the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to publicise certain applications. Local Planning Authorities have a duty to consider any representation made as part of the process of determining applications. Although Article 6 of the Human Rights Act secures individuals the right to a fair and public hearing, there is no statutory requirement to allow third parties, other consultees or applicants to address Members of the Planning Committee as part of the process of determining planning applications. Wyre Forest District Council, however, recognises that it is as a mark of good practice to allow such public speaking at committee.

4.20 The procedure for public speaking at WFDC is set out in detail the development practice note [Public Speaking at Planning Committee](#). However, in summary:

The Right to Speak at Planning Committee	
Open to	Not Open to
Third party objectors to the development	Applicants or their representatives unless as a 'right of reply'
Third party supporters of the development proposed	Statutory consultees (although these may from time to time be invited to address committee by the chairman)
In the absence of any speakers in support of the development, and only where there is a speaker opposing the development, the applicant or his chosen representative	

4.21 Due to the time constraints of committee meetings and to ensure that the balance is not unfairly tilted, the first person to register to speak against an application will have a slot. If another objector requests to speak, it will be refused and recommended that they liaise with the registered speaker.

4.22 Any person wishing to speak on an application must:

- notify the case officer dealing with the application in writing of your desire to speak, within 21 days of the date of the adjoining properties notification letter or press/site notice; and
- register your wish to speak with Committee Services by telephoning 01562 732763 within the same 21 day time limit; and
- submit your formal written objections in full to the case officer within the same 21 day time limit. Any additional or amended objections can be submitted beyond the initial 21 day period.

4.23 If you have registered to speak, you will be advised in writing by Committee Services whether you have the right to speak prior to the relevant committee meeting. If you wish to telephone to check please do not do so until a week before the committee meeting.

Member Involvement

- 4.24 Local Councillors will be encouraged to participate in the planning process at pre-application stage by attending public meetings and exhibitions in line with the Member's Code of Good Practice. However, Councillors should keep an open mind and not give an opinion at this stage as pre-determination of a planning application may prejudice their position in any future decision making on that matter at Planning Committee.

Consultation on Amendment to an Application

- 4.25 Occasionally applicants will wish to amend their approved plans. Where the proposed amendments results in a material change to the original proposal, re-consultation will take place. Minor amendments (submitted as a non-material amendment or variation of condition application) which result in no significant change or impact will not normally be subject to consultation.

Appeals

- 4.26 When a planning application is refused, or not determined by the authority within the statutory period, the applicant may appeal to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate. There are broadly three different appeal types; written representations, hearings and public enquiries. The local planning authority will carry out the following public notifications;
- All of those people who were consulted on the original application and those who commented on the application will be re-notified.
 - If the appeal is to be heard by informal hearing or public inquiry, all of those people who were consulted on the original application will be re-notified, with information about the date, time and venue of the hearing. If it is a significant hearing/inquiry a site notice detailing the date, time and location of the hearing/inquiry will be posted on or near the site.
 - If the appeal is for a householder (fast track) application, all of those people who were consulted on the original will be notified.
- 4.27 In all instances any comments received on the original application will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. Additional written representations can be made in all instances except where the appeal route is the householder fast-track option, which does not allow for additional representations to be made. Third parties can speak at appeal hearings and enquiries, however this is at the discretion of the Inspector in the case of hearings and is subject to the rules for Public Enquiries for such appeals.

5 Appendix One: Local Plan Consultation requirements

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Regulation 18: Issues and Options

Regulation 18 sets out the requirements for early engagement

What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
<p>Notify both the specific and general consultation bodies of the subject of the local plan which they propose to prepare.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect evidence and establish wider policy framework. • Consider issues and alternatives. • Establish scope of the SA/SEA. • Carry out the ‘duty to co-operate’ requirement. 	<p>In order to meet the requirements of Regulation 18 the District Council will notify all of those people registered on the database, which it feels are appropriate, that the document will be prepared. This will be done in writing via email or letter.</p> <p>Statutory consultees will be consulted on the SA/SEA.</p>
<p>Invite those people notified to make representations to the local authority about what a local plan should contain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and publish ‘Preferred Options’ Draft Document. • Carry out initial Equality Impact Assessment. • Prepare interim SA/SEA. • Consult for a minimum statutory period of six weeks. • Prepare Consultation Statement. 	<p>In order to publicise the proposals to residents and businesses in the area we will utilise the following methods (as appropriate) to advertise the consultation and make consultation documents available for inspection including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on the website, council buildings and other locations as considered appropriate. - hold public exhibitions, events and workshops or more focused meetings where appropriate (please see below). - use social media and/or local media to raise awareness - <p>An interactive version of the consultation document will be made available to enable electronic representations to be made.</p> <p>In addition to meeting the requirements of Regulation 18, the District Council will</p>

		<p>also at this stage make available all of the relevant consultation material on its website and in the appropriate deposit locations within the District. Documents will also be available to loan.</p> <p>In order to increase levels of engagement, it may be considered appropriate to hold exhibitions within accessible locations to publicise proposals to a wider audience. Exhibitions may be held in the three main towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. Exhibitions will only be held in the rural areas where there are specific proposals relating to that area and it is deemed appropriate to do so. When organising the exhibition schedule and venues, consideration will be given to selecting venues and tailoring opening hours to attract the widest audience. Where appropriate this could include exhibitions taking place during the evening and/or a Saturday.</p> <p>Online tools such as Microsoft teams and zoom will also be considered to provide opportunities for people who wish to meet with officers but cannot attend exhibitions.</p>
<p>Take into account any representations received when preparing the draft local plan.</p>		<p>All representations received at this stage will be acknowledged within five working days of their receipt and will be entered into a database and summarised. The representations and District Council responses will be published on the District Council's website and will be used to inform the preparation of the draft local plan. Tables setting out the summary of representations and the</p>

		District Council's responses to these will also be made available in the deposit locations.
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6 Appendix Two: Supplementary Planning Documents

Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Regulation 12 and 13: The local authority must prepare a statement setting out who was consulted, the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed in the SPD.		
What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
State in the consultation statement how the main issues in the SPD were established.	A draft SPD will be consulted on for a minimum of 4 weeks.	<p>Email/letters to be sent out to statutory consultees, parish and town councils and neighbouring authorities asking for comments on the draft SPD.</p> <p>A press release will be issued and posted on the website and on social media channels inviting comments from the public.</p> <p>Copies of the draft SPD will be available electronically on the WFDC website. Hard copies will be available at the council offices and libraries at Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport. Responses can be made electronically via an online form, via email or in writing. Comments can also be made by speaking to the lead officer for the SPD, details of which will be provided in the draft SPD.</p>
State the main issues raised and how these have been addressed in the SPD	Issues raised and how these have been addressed in the SPD will be included in the committee report	All representations received will be acknowledged within five working days of their receipt and will be entered into a database and summarised. The representations and District Council responses will be published as part of the consultation statement which will be presented to Full Council alongside the

		SPD and adoption statement.
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Regulation 14: Adoption		
What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
The SPD and adoption statement should be made available as soon as possible after adoption.	Upon Council resolving to adopt an SPD, an adoption statement will be prepared and publicised alongside the adopted SPD.	<p>Consultees who have asked to be kept informed will be notified by post or email (as per their request) by WFDC.</p> <p>The adoption statement and SPD will be made available on the WFDC website.</p>

7 Appendix Three: Neighbourhood Planning

Regulation 6 and 7 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012): Designating a Neighbourhood Area		
What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
The district council must publicise and consult on an area application for a period of 6 weeks	The District Council must publicise it on their website and in any other manner considered appropriate to bring it to the attention of people living, working or carrying out business in the area. The authority must publish a copy of the area application, details of how to make representations and the date by which representations should be made. A period of at least six weeks must be allowed for representations to be made	Neighbourhood area applications will be published on the District Council's website as a minimum but may also be advertised on the qualifying body's website where possible. Additionally, where possible, notices will be placed within the area, for example, on Parish notice boards.
The district council must publicise the decision on the area designation.	<p>If a neighbourhood area application is approved, the District Council must publicise the name of the area, a map of the area and the name of the body who applied for the area to be designated on their website and in any other manner considered appropriate to bring it to the attention of people living, working or carrying out business in the area.</p> <p>If the application for the neighbourhood area is refused, the District Council must publish the 'decision statement' which must set out the reasons for refusing the application, together with details of where the decision statement can be inspected, on their website and in any other manner considered appropriate to bring it to the attention of people living, working or</p>	Full details will be placed on the District Council's website, including a table of representations and details of how these were considered. Where an application is refused, the 'decision statement' will be placed at Wyre Forest House in Kidderminster, as well as in any appropriate public buildings within the area covered by the application.

	carrying out business in the area.	
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Regulation 9 and 10 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012): Designating a Neighbourhood Forum

What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
Regulation 9: Publicise an application for a neighbourhood forum	<p>As soon as possible after receiving a neighbourhood forum application, the District Council must publicise the following on their website and in any other manner considered appropriate to bring it to the attention of people living, working or carrying out business in the area:</p> <p>A copy of the application.</p> <p>A statement that if the designation is made no other organisation or body may be designated for that neighbourhood area until that designation expires or is withdrawn.</p> <p>Details of how to make representations and the date by which they must be received, being no less than six weeks from when the application was first publicised.</p>	The District Council must consult on the application for a minimum of six weeks. The Council will publish the application on its website as a minimum. In addition, a press release will be issued which may lead to media coverage.
Regulation 10: Publicise designating a neighbourhood forum	<p>As soon as possible after designating a neighbourhood forum the District Council must publicise the following on their web-site and in any other manner appropriate to bring it to the attention of people living, working or carrying out business in the area considered. The name of the neighbourhood forum.</p> <p>A copy of the written constitution of the neighbourhood forum.</p>	Neighbourhood forum applications will be published on the District Council's website as a minimum but may also be advertised on the qualifying body's website where possible. Additionally, where possible, notices will be placed within the area, for example, on Parish notice boards.

	<p>The name of the neighbourhood area to which the designation relates.</p> <p>Contact details for at least one member of the neighbourhood forum.</p>	
<p>Regulation 10: If a neighbourhood forum application is refused.</p>	<p>Where an application for a neighbourhood forum is refused the District Council must publicise the following:</p> <p>A copy of the 'refusal statement' setting out the decision and the reasons for making that decision.</p> <p>Details of when and where the refusal statement can be inspected.</p>	<p>Full details will be placed on the District Council's website, including a table of representations and details of how these were considered. Where an application is refused, the 'decision statement' will be placed at Wyre Forest House in Kidderminster, as well as in any appropriate public buildings within the area covered by the application.</p>

Regulation 14: Pre-submission Consultation and Publicity of the Neighbourhood Plan		
What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
<p>Regulation 14 sets out the requirements for the consultation which the qualifying body (the designated neighbourhood area/forum) must undertake on a neighbourhood development plan before it is submitted to the District Council.</p>	<p>The regulation requires that the qualifying body publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the area.</p> <p>Details of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan.</p> <p>Details of where and when the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan may be inspected.</p> <p>Details of how to make representations and the date by which they must be made which must be at least six weeks from when the proposals were first publicised.</p> <p>That the qualifying body consult any of the</p>	<p>The qualifying body must decide how they are to consult but some suggestions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet drop to all households within the neighbourhood area (if requested and funded by the PC or NP team) • Posters within the neighbourhood area. • Exhibitions. • Public meetings. • Workshop events. • Information on the qualifying body's website. <p>The Council can assist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on District Council's website.

	<p>consultation bodies listed in the regulations whose interests may be affected by the neighbourhood development plan.</p> <p>That the qualifying body send the local planning authority a copy of the neighbourhood development plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release via the District Council.
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Regulation 16: Plan Proposals		
What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
<p>Regulation 16 requires that the District Council must publicise the Neighbourhood Submission Development Plan on their website and in a manner that is likely to bring the attention of people who live, work, or carry out business in the area</p>	<p>The following details must be published:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan proposals • Where and when the plan can be inspected. • Details of how to make representations. • A statement that any person making representations may request to be notified of the District Council's decision to whether or not to adopt the neighbourhood development plan. • The date by which representations must be received being no less than 6 weeks from the date the proposal is first publicised. • Notify any consultation body referred to in the consultation statement submitted, alongside the neighbourhood development plan that the plan has been submitted. 	<p>The following consultation techniques will be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and publication of a statement setting out when and where documents can be inspected, details of how to make representations and when they must be made by, and that any persons making representations may request to be notified of the local authority's decision on a plan proposal. • Written notification to all of those bodies who were consulted by the qualifying body during the plan's preparation. • Publication of the neighbourhood development plan on District Council's website. • Publication of the neighbourhood development plan on qualifying bodies website where appropriate. • Displaying of posters within the neighbourhood area.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making copies of the documents available to view at Wyre Forest House in Kidderminster and at any locations within the neighbourhood area where documents were made available under Regulation 14. • Preparing a press release.
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Regulation 18: Inspectors Report

What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
Once the inspector's report has been received by the District Council and a decision has been made regarding how to proceed, Regulation 18 requires that the District Council publish on their website and in a manner that is likely to bring the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the area.	<p>WFDC must issue:</p> <p>The 'decision statement' which sets out their decision and the reasons for it.</p> <p>Details of where the decision statement can be inspected.</p> <p>The inspector's report.</p>	Once the inspector's report is received, the District Council will decide how to proceed with the neighbourhood development plan and publish their decision in a 'decision statement' which will be made available on the District Council's website and in those places where the plan was made available during the Regulation 16 consultation period. A copy of the 'decision statement' will be sent to the qualifying body and to any person who requested to be notified. The District Council will also ask the qualifying body to publish the 'decision statement' on their website, where possible, and will use posters in the neighbourhood area to advertise the fact the 'decision statement' is available.

Regulation 20: Neighbourhood Development Plan

What is required	Process and Requirements	How this will be achieved
Notification that a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted	Once the District Council has adopted a neighbourhood development plan Regulation 20 requires that they:	Once the neighbourhood development plan is adopted, WFDC will publish their decision in a 'decision statement' which will be

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish on their website and a manner that is likely to bring the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the area: • The neighbourhood development plan • Details of where and when the neighbourhood development plan can be inspected. • Notify any person who has asked to be notified of the making of the neighbourhood development plan and where and when it can be inspected. 	<p>made available on the District Council's website and in those places where the plan was made available during the Regulation 16 consultation period. A copy of the 'decision statement' will be sent to the qualifying body and to any person who requested to be notified. The District Council will also ask the qualifying body to publish the 'decision statement' and the neighbourhood development plan on their website, where possible, and will use posters in the neighbourhood area to advertise the fact the 'decision statement' is available and the neighbourhood plan adopted.</p>
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**Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2023-2024**

June 2023

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q4 update
Review of inclusive play equipment in the parks owned by WFDC

July 2023

Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2023 – 2040
Wyre Forest District Council Health and Wellbeing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Review of Public Space Protection Orders – consultation
Nominations for Treasury Management Review Panel (Chair to be appointed)

September 2023

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q1 update
Environmental Enforcement Policy
Localism Strategy

October 2023

Wyre Forest District Council Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

November 2023

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q2 update

December 2023

Wyre Forest Health Action Plan Update
Climate Change Action Plan Update and Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan 2024 - 27
Cost of Living Action Plan Update

January 2024

WFDC Local Development Scheme (LDS)
Review of Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
EXEMPT – Acquisition of property in Kidderminster

February 2024

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q3 update
Capital portfolio fund - Jones Valerio

March 2024

Empty Property Strategy
Housing Assistance Policy
Design, Amenity and Shopfronts, Supplementary Planning Document
Conservation Area Character Appraisal (Stourport Number One and Two)
Local Enforcement Plan

May 2024

Local Validation Criteria