

**REPORT TO: PLANNING MEMBER WORKING GROUP**

**Date of Meeting: 22 May 2018**

**REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE**

**Date of Meeting: 10 July 2018**

**Report of: City Development Manager**

**Title: Revised Local Development Scheme**

**Is this a Key Decision?**

Yes

**Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Executive.

**1. What is the report about?**

To approve a revised Local Development Scheme.

**2. Recommendations:**

That Planning Member Working Group support and Executive agree the Local Development Scheme attached as Appendix A, to have effect from 20 June 2018.

**3. Reasons for the recommendations:**

To provide a revised timetable for plan preparation. The timetable will be published on the Council's website and have effect from the agreed date.

**4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources:**

The financial implications were considered by Executive and Council on 12 July and 26 July 2016 respectively. The agreed GESP evidence budget should not be affected by the extended timescale. However, the GESP team, consisting of staff members from each of the relevant authorities would need to continue in place for the additional period. Additional staff resources (probably two additional forward planning officers) will be needed to take forward the Exeter Development Delivery Plan.

**5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

There are no additional financial implications for Council to consider contained in this report.

**6. What are the legal aspects?**

A Local Development Scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). This must specify (among other matters) the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the Local Plan for the area. It must be made available publically and kept up-to-date. It is published on the website and allows local communities and interested parties to keep track of progress.

**7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

Exeter City Council's Core strategy which contains its housing allocation targets for the period up to 2026 is vulnerable to challenge and will become increasingly so challengeable until such

time as both EXETER Development Delivery Plan and Greater Exeter Strategic Plan have finally been adopted. Given that care should be given to ensure that no further slippage occurs.

There could be reputational damage to the Council in terms of transparency and accountability if the scheme is not updated.

## **8. Equalities Impact:**

None

## **9. Risk:**

Risks include the potential failure of all partner authorities to agree recommendations resulting in further timetable slippage.

## **10. Report details:**

### **10.1. Background**

- 10.1.1 Members may recall the report that went to Executive on 10 January 2017 approving the current Local Development Scheme (LDS). The current LDS was adopted on 18 January 2017 and contains proposed timetables for the preparation of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) and the Exeter Development Delivery Plan. The LDS is a statutory statement of the timetable for local plan preparation and should be kept under review.
- 10.2.2 Unfortunately a key milestone in the preparation of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan has been missed, consultation on a draft plan in January 2018. It is therefore necessary to review the GESP timetable. The preparation of the Exeter Development Delivery Plan is partly dependant on the contents of the GESP and therefore its timetable also needs to be reviewed at the same time.

### **10.3 GESP Timetable**

- 10.3.1. The preparation of the GESP has been held up by a number of factors, the main ones being as follows;
- Significant and ongoing review of national planning and housing policies, commencing with the Housing White Paper and most recently involving a draft revised NPPF and associated Practice Guidance. These documents include amendments to the five year supply approach, a new housing “delivery test” and changes to the way housing need is calculated.
  - A very high response to the “call for sites” with over 700 sites made available, which needed to be assessed and considered via the HELAA (Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment) process.
  - The need to resolve complex transport issues associated with the plan, particularly in the Exeter area, including extensive modelling, roadside interviews and scheme assessment. This work is still ongoing and will inform a key element of the GESP strategy.

- 10.3.2 It is not expected that the transport work will be ready before the end of 2018, given the complexities and in particular the need to ensure that Highways England are content with the work. The NPPF review is expected to be complete in the summer of 2018. These factors mean that the draft plan is not likely to be ready before spring 2019. In order to avoid issues of Purdah associated with the local elections in May 2019 it is therefore now proposed that the draft plan should be published in June 2019. An 8 week consultation period is allowed for (subject to approval of the Statement of Community Involvement), longer than the normal 6 weeks referred to in the regulations.
- 10.3.3 Allowing for the various legal and other requirements of plan making, the proposed LDS sets publication/proposed submission in September 2020, plan submission in March 2021 and adoption in December 2021.
- 10.3.4 Each of the other local planning authorities preparing GESP has taken or will be taking a report to update their LDS which contains an identical timetable and section on the GESP.

#### **10.4 The Development Delivery Plan Timetable**

- 10.4.1 Exeter had already made significant progress with the Development Delivery Plan. The work on this document has not been wasted and once the GESP has made sufficient progress the Development Delivery Plan can be revised and updated and then moved towards adoption.
- 10.4.2 However, there are elements of the Development Delivery Plan which need to follow on from the GESP, in particular the number and broad distribution of new homes and some other forms of development will be a GESP strategic decision. Accordingly, it is not possible to adopt the Development Delivery Plan until after GESP is adopted and the timetable and adoption date will need to be pushed back overall to reflect GESP.
- 10.4.3 Allowing for the various legal and other requirements of plan making, the proposed LDS sets publication/proposed submission in October 2021, plan submission in March 2022 and adoption in December 2022.
- 10.4.4 At present there is no forward planning resource available to take forward the Exeter Development Delivery Plan, the two existing policy planners having been seconded to the GESP team. A further paper indicating how this work, which will begin in earnest in the next financial year, will be resourced along with other changes to the City Development structure will be brought to Executive in due course. It is likely that any additional resources will be largely funded through increased revenue from planning application fees which were increased by government earlier this year.

#### **10.5 Conclusion**

- 10.5.1 The revised LDS, taking account of the issues raised above, is attached at Appendix A and you are recommended to approve it for publication, to come into force on 20 June 2018. The GESP section is common between the four local planning authorities, while the Exeter Development Delivery Plan section is specific to this Council.

**City Development Manager**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**  
**Background papers used in compiling this report:-**

- NPPF - <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/>
- Local Plans Expert Group Report - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-plans-expert-group-report-to-the-secretary-of-state>
- Devolution bid statement of intent - <http://www.heartofswlep.co.uk/sites/default/files/user-1889/Heart%20of%20the%20South%20West%20Devolution%20Prospectus.pdf>

Contact for enquires:  
Democratic Services (Committees)  
Room 2.3  
01392 265275