



Report for: Cabinet

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| Date of Meeting: | 16 February 2023 |
| Subject: | Harrow Local Plan - revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) |
| Key Decision: | Yes - affects more than one ward |
| Responsible Officer: | Dipti Patel - Corporate Director Place; Viv Evans – Chief Planning Officer |
| Portfolio Holder: | Councillor Marilyn Ashton - Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder Planning & Regeneration |
| Exempt: | No |
| Decision subject to Call-in: | Yes |
| Wards affected: | All Wards |
| Enclosures: | Appendix 1 – Proposed updated Harrow Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Version 9) Appendix 2 – Reference from the Planning Policy Advisory Panel on 9 January 2023 |

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report provides an update on the review of the Harrow Local Plan, specifically the proposed Local Plan timeline and updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) to reflect this. The LDS sets out a three-year timeline in which the Local Plan will be reviewed, in line with legislation.

Recommendations:

Following consideration by the Planning Policy Advisory Panel and its recommendation, the Cabinet is requested to consider the report and:

1. Approve the revised LDS attached at Appendix 1; and
2. Agree that the scheme is to have effect from the date of approval by Cabinet.

Reason (for recommendations): Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council has a statutory duty to maintain an up-to-date LDS. The Localism Act 2011 stipulates that the LDS must be updated every three years. The revised LDS (attached at Appendix 1) will fulfil that requirement.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the review of the Harrow Local Plan. In response to this, it sets out a revised timetable for formally reviewing Harrow's Local Plan, to comply with requirements within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ("Local Plan Regulations"). The mechanism for doing this is through an update to the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), a rolling three-year project plan setting out all the planning documents to be produced by the local authority and the timetable for their preparation. Once adopted by the Cabinet, the revised LDS will supersede the current version.

2.0 Options considered

- 2.1 The revised LDS is intended to replace the current LDS adopted in November 2019.
- 2.2 Section 19 (1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) (i.e. the Local Plan) be prepared in accordance with the LDS. This includes complying with the timetable contained in the LDS. If the project timetables for preparing a DPD and that in the LDS differ significantly, this is likely to lead to a finding

of non-compliance with the statutory legal test at the independent examination of the relevant DPD, making the document 'unsound'.

- 2.3 If a DPD forming part of the Local Plan is considered not up to date (generally considered being anything older than five years), the Government also has powers to intervene to update the document on behalf of the Council. Therefore, the only valid option available is to revise the project timetable in the LDS and progress the Local Plan review in accordance with the timeframes set out in the revised LDS to satisfy the legal requirements of the Act. The options of not updating the LDS nor progressing the review have been considered but dismissed.

3.0 Background

Local Plans

- 3.1 National planning policy places Local Plans at the heart of the planning system and consequently the Government considers that it is essential that they are in place and kept up to date. Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design.
- 3.2 The Local Plan is also a key mechanism in assisting the delivery of many Council services and priorities, such as the securing of affordable housing, achieving high quality of development in the borough, managing the location, quantity and quality of development (including houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) flat conversions, and tall buildings) and promoting the vibrancy and vitality of town centres, responding to the climate and nature emergency, planning for infrastructure, and fulfilling the Council's priorities of putting residents first, and creating a borough that residents can be proud of.
- 3.3 Local Plans are also a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as they are the starting point for considering whether applications can be approved.
- 3.4 Harrow's Local Plan currently comprises the following documents:
- a. Core Strategy – adopted February 2012
 - b. Development Management Policies – adopted July 2013
 - c. Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan (AAP) – adopted July 2013
 - d. Site Allocations – adopted July 2013
- 3.5 The development plan is accompanied by an adopted Policies Map that illustrates particular land uses throughout the Borough including areas for protection such as open space and conservation areas, as well as employment and residential activities. It also identifies key sites for development ('site allocations').

- 3.6 The development plan also includes the Joint West London Waste Plan (adopted July 2015).

4.0 Proposed Local Plan review

- 4.1 As noted above, the Council has a fully adopted Local Plan, comprising five development plan documents and accompanying Policies Map. However, it is a requirement of the Government to keep Local Plans up to date. Given the Mayor of London has produced a new London Plan (published 2021), the Council intends to update (and consolidate) all the documents forming the current Local Development Framework (LDF) simultaneously to ensure continued conformity with the London Plan. The updated documents will also reflect recent changes to national policy and any relevant legislative changes).

Approach to the review

- 4.2 A number of policies in the Local Plan will need to change to take account of the legislative and policy changes since the Local Development Framework documents were adopted, as well as changed circumstances in the borough (i.e. the impact of Covid-19) and new evidence. A number of new policies are also likely to be needed. However, a number of the existing policies in the Local Plan are considered to remain current and fit for purpose (based on continuing conformity with national and regional policy and ongoing monitoring through the Authority's Monitoring Report) and these will be incorporated into the new Local Plan. Given the scale of the increase in the London Plan housing target for Harrow, the nature of the proposed source of this additional housing (i.e. 'suburban intensification') as highlighted in the new London Plan, it is considered that a full review of the current Harrow Local Development Framework documents is required.
- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the Government's preferred approach is for each local planning authority to prepare a single Local Plan for its area (or a joint document with neighbouring areas). This is a significant change from the previous Government's approach of a number of separate documents comprising the Local Development Framework, evident by the list of Harrow LDF documents listed above. While additional Local Plans can be produced, for example a separate site allocations document or Area Action Plan, there should be a clear justification for doing so. It is therefore envisaged that the new Local Plan will involve a reduced number of documents, with the Core Strategy, Development Management Policies and Site Allocations being combined into a single document. The existing Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan may remain a separate, updated document, or alternatively be included in the main Local Plan document.
- 4.4 With a single Local Plan being prepared, the document will contain strategic priorities (i.e. housing, employment etc) and strategic policies to deliver these; these strategic policies will be clearly distinguished from non-strategic

policies, as required by the new National Planning Policy Framework. Strategic priorities should be consistent with those within the emerging Corporate Plan.

- 4.5 The new Local Plan will cover the 20 year period from 2021/22 to 2040/41.
- 4.6 The Planning Policy Advisory Panel will consider reports and draft documents as the development of the new Local Plan progresses. Cabinet (and where necessary, full Council) will consider the draft Local Plan at least twice and the final plan once found sound by the Planning Inspectorate. These key milestones are set out in the LDS.

Local Development Scheme

- 4.7 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is a rolling three-year project plan setting out all the planning documents to be produced by the authority and the timetable for their preparation. The timetable should identify specific milestones for measuring completion of each part of the document preparation process.
- 4.8 The LDS is important because it is intended to keep the public and other stakeholders informed of the Local Plan documents the Council is intending to prepare and when, and at what stage people and / or organisations can get involved in that process.

Proposed Local Plan Timeframes

- 4.9 The process of reviewing the Local Plan involves a number of stages required by the regulations governing plan preparation, including:
 1. Public consultation on the matters to be covered in the review [Regulation 18 of the Local Plan Regulations]. This is often split into two stages: consultation on 'issues and options' followed by consultation on a draft version of the Local Plan.
 2. Consideration of representations received and revisions to the draft Local Plan.
 3. Agreement by the local planning authority of the version it intends to submit for examination ('proposed submission version').
 4. Publication of the proposed submission version of the Local Plan, along with an open invitation to submit representations (Regulations 19 and 20).
 5. Submission of the proposed Local Plan and supporting documents to the Secretary of State, along with any representations received at pre-submission publication.
 6. Independent examination by a planning inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State; this involves an assessment against legal and procedural requirements and consideration of the 'soundness' of the plan against four tests (positively prepared, justified, effective, consistent with national policy).

7. Assuming the Local Plan is found to be ‘sound’ by the inspector, adoption of the Local Plan by the local planning authority.

| Stage | Date |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Evidence base preparation | January 2018 – June 2023 |
| Regulation 18: Consultation on Draft Local Plan | September – October 2023 (8 weeks) |
| Regulations 19 and 20: Pre-submission consultation (six weeks for representations) | September- October 2024 (6 weeks) |
| Regulation 22: Submission of the Local Plan and representations to Secretary of State | January 2025 |
| Independent Examination – hearings | January-November 2025 |
| Receive Inspector’s report | November 2025 |
| Adoption | December 2025 (at the latest) |

4.10 The proposed timeframes for each local plan development stage are shown above. These timeframes are included in the LDS update and will form the basis for Local Plan engagement and adoption.

4.11 These timelines are tightly condensed and are reliant on the availability of funding for additional planning policy officer resources and consultants fees. This additional funding is addressed in the budget items elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting. The timelines are also subject to change if the central government makes significant changes to the planning system or local authority planning powers. These changes are out of the control of the council and may impact local plan outcomes. This risk and proposed mitigations have been included in the risk management section of this report.

4.12 The approach to the Local Plan review is also reflected in the LDS.

Ward Councillors’ comments

Not applicable – covers all wards

Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **Yes** – as part of a weekly report reviewed by the Chief Planning Officer

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below. **yes** – risks specifically relating to LDS / programme below. Key risks are also included in paragraph 4.7 of the LDS itself. Further detail is available as a background paper.

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

| Risk Description | Mitigations | RAG Status |
|---|---|------------|
| LDS is a legal requirement for Local Plan examination. Local Plan will not pass examination without an up-to-date LDS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt the updated LDS ▪ Revise the LDS if needed to ensure current version reflects proposed programme | Green |
| Central Government introduces new legislation which impacts on Local Plan timelines. New LDS needed to revised timelines. (See also detail below) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing monitoring of any potential legislative changes and impacts (see below and background papers). ▪ Unable to mitigate fully but the contingency in this regard would be to review the plan and change the plan as necessary | Amber |
| The strategic priorities of the LDS are not consistent with and/or do not support achievement of the Council's corporate plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LDS is consistent with the Council's Priorities as documented in this report. ▪ If necessary, the LDS can be amended to ensure consistency. | Green |
| Community unaware of the Local Plan engagement background and timelines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopting the updated LDS which facilitates adoption of the SCI (Statement of Community Involvement ▪ Maintain LDS timeline and adopt updated versions of the LDS as necessary. ▪ Covered by the Statement of Community Involvement ▪ The Council has procured information and engagement software and informs and consults using this software and platform. | Green |

Legislative risks

Two pieces of legislation have recently been produced by the government that directly relate to planning and development. Close attention will need to be given to their development, and any other legislation that may emerge. The content of the bills has significant potential to adversely impact upon the Local Plan as it is prepared, both in terms of its content, processes, and timeframes. A summary of the risks posed by these bills is provided below (with more detail published as a background paper):

The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill

This legislation proposes several major reforms to the planning sector. The Medium and High-risk aspects relevant to the Local Plan are detailed below.

National Development Management Policies (NDMP) are proposed that local authorities would need to comply with. The scope of the policies is still unknown, although it is suggested that where there is a conflict between Local Plan or London Plan policies, the NDMPs would take priority. It is understood that the London Plan and Local Plans could not be inconsistent with or repeat any of the NDMPs. The NDMPs will make it difficult to adopt a locally distinctive approach to issues such as affordable housing or flooding. It is unclear whether the final regulations will allow flexibility for Local Plans to introduce policies to address local issues. The biggest risk posed by this aspect of the bill is the uncertainty around the level of impact it will have on Local Plan preparation as very little information has been made publicly available. Further information is likely to be made public in Spring 2023 during the development of the initial draft of the Harrow Local Plan prior to Regulation 18 Consultation (i.e. the first draft of the Plan). This aspect poses a HIGH risk to the Local Plan.

A new Infrastructure Levy is proposed to be charged as a percentage of gross development value. This levy is intended to replace the existing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and potentially S106 agreements which apply directly to developments. It is expected that LPA's will adopt the new levy and make transitional arrangements gradually. Test areas have been proposed in partnership with LPAs to assess the impact of the levy. The impact of the Levy on Local Plan timeframes is unknown, officers will continue to monitor the outcomes of consultation and testing. The risk assessment for this aspect is MEDIUM.

Neighbourhood Priority Statements are proposed in the bill as a tool that allows local communities to set out key priorities and preferences for their area. The preparation of Local Plans will be required to take these into account. No details have yet been provided regarding when new regulations for the NPS may come into force. The NPPF will be updated, and councils will be required to demonstrate compliance. Transitional arrangements will likely apply. The risk assessment for this aspect is LOW/MEDIUM.

Local Plan Sustainability Appraisals (SEA) will be replaced with a new simpler environmental assessment focussing on clear, tangible environmental outcomes set by the government. The new Environmental Assessment may result in a significant level of abortive work, as Sustainability Appraisals are undertaken at each stage of the Local Plan process. There may also be cost implications relating to any changes required. This aspect of the bill has been assessed as MEDIUM/HIGH risk.

The removal of the requirement to demonstrate a 5-year land supply of deliverable housing sites has been proposed in the bill, this only applies if the LPA has an up to date Local Plan (< 5 years old). This aims to incentivise the production of plans and prevent speculative development via appeal. This proposed change may result in delays to the production and adoption of the draft Local Plan as a larger number of sites may be promoted via the Local Plan process. Officers will mitigate this through ensuring effective engagement and consultation with landowners and developers is undertaken via a SHLAA call for sites and Local Plan process. Officers will continue to monitor for updates. This aspect of the bill has been assessed as a MEDIUM risk.

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities launched consultation on proposed changes to the NPPF on the 22nd December 2022, this consultation will close on 2nd March 2023 with a response to the consultation due in Spring 2023.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill

This bill is expected to repackage some of the reforms initially proposed in the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill. While no Medium or High risks are posed by the bill, it is important to note that it proposes the reduction of planning and environmental restrictions for infrastructure projects. This is unlikely to impact Harrow due to the nature of the borough's-built form. Investment Zones (now Knowledge Clusters) are also proposed by the bill with the aim of creating low tax hubs for universities with reduced planning and environmental controls.

Procurement Implications

There are no direct procurement implications arising as a result of this report. Any procurement required as part of the Local Plan review will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal Implications

Under s.15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) there is a statutory duty placed on local planning authority that it must prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the documents that the Council will prepare as development plan documents and the timetable for their preparation and revision. If a local planning authority have not prepared a local development scheme, the Secretary of State or the Mayor of London may—
(a) prepare a local development scheme for the authority, and
(b) direct the authority to bring that scheme into effect. S.19 specifies that the development plan documents must be prepared in accordance with the LPS. The publishing of this version of the LDS will satisfy these duties and enable compliance with the requirement under Local Plan Regulations (reg. 10A) to review a local plan every 5 years.

To bring the scheme into effect, the local planning authority must resolve that the scheme is to have effect, and in the resolution specify the date from which the scheme is to have effect (s.15(7) of the 2004 Act).

Under Part 3A of the Council's Constitution, the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet include responsibility for: approving plans which are not the responsibility of Council and any other non-statutory plans that, from time to time, may be considered their responsibility; All key decisions; Determination of recommendations and references from the Council or any of its Committees or sub-committees and which the Cabinet considers are appropriate for collective decision.

Financial Implications

Preparation of a Local Plan is a significant undertaking, requiring resourcing for officers and revenue budget to undertake evidence base work, consultation, document production and independent examination. The resourcing is required to ensure the draft Plan is found sound as it is based on an evidence base of appropriate coverage and quality, all statutory requirements have been met (preparation of sustainability appraisals etc) and can be undertaken in a timely manner. Additional resources to achieve this have been sought as part of the 2023/24 MTFS process. A growth bid of £206k over 3 years is included in the 2023/24 budget report which will be presented at Cabinet / Council in February 2023 (i.e. this meeting). The tables below provide a breakdown of projected additional costs and proposed funding sources above the current budget position.

| Additional costs | 23/24 (£) | 24/25 (£) | 25/26 (£) | Total (23/24-25/26) (£) |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Evidence base / consultancy | 212,500 | 152,500 | 30,000 | 395,000 |
| Production / consultation / examination | 50,000 | 40,000 | 160,000 | 250,000 |
| Additional officer resource | 137,000 | 206,000 | 69,000 | 412,000 |
| Total | 399,500 | 398,500 | 259,000 | 1,057,000 |

| Funding sources | 23/24 (£) | 24/25 (£) | 25/26 (£) | Total (23/24-25/26) (£) |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| MTFS growth funding bid | 206,000 | 206,000 | 206,000 | 618,000 |
| Grant funding received | 105,000 | 98,739 | 0 | 203,739 |
| Existing revenue budget (consultancy) | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 | 75,000 |
| Internal planning resource | 63,500 | 68,761 | 28,000 | 160,261 |
| Total | 399,500 | 398,500 | 259,000 | 1,057,000 |

Costs and funding will be monitored as part of ongoing budget monitoring process for the Planning Service and any significant variances identified along with mitigation measures to ensure a balanced budget position.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

The LDS only establishes the programme and timetable for preparing Local Plan documents and therefore does not give rise to equalities impacts.

The importance of inclusive engagement and engaging with hard to reach groups is recognised and the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The LDS provides the timelines for engagement which are detailed in the SCI. The two documents work in tandem to satisfy equalities requirements.

Environmental Implications

There are no immediate environmental implications arising from this report. The draft Local Plan will be subject to a full sustainability appraisal and Integrated Impact

Assessment which will provide a detailed review of all possible environmental implications.

Council Priorities

- 1. A council that puts residents first**
- 2. A borough that is clean and safe**
- 3. A place where those in need are supported**

The LDS sets out the timeframes for development of a new Local Plan which sets policy that would put residents first through consultation and delivery of services. The Local Plan will address all council priorities at a policy level and set the direction for future development of the borough. The Local Plan will put residents first by involving them in the development of policies through extensive community consultation.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Jessie Man

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 2nd February 2023

Statutory Officer: Baljit Bhandal

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 30th January 2023

Corporate Director of Place: Dipti Patel

Signed by the Corporate Director

Date: 27th January 2023

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 26th January 2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 2nd February 2023

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: NO – refer to equalities section above.

The LDS sets out the timeframe for the preparation of the new Local Plan; the Plan itself will be subject to a full EqlA but the LDS does not impact upon a service or change policy.

EqlA cleared by: N/A

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: David Hughes, Planning Policy Manager,
david.hughes@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

- National Planning Policy Framework: [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101381/nppf-2019.pdf)
- London Plan (2021): [The London Plan | London City Hall](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/what-we-are-doing/the-london-plan-2021)
- Harrow Local Plan: [Planning and Developments – Harrow Council](https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-and-developments)
- Risk assessment of current legislative proposals on the timeframes for the new Harrow Local Plan: [Local Development Scheme - Background Paper Legislative Risk.pdf \(harrow.gov.uk\)](https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-and-developments/background-papers/legislative-risk)
- [Planning Policy Advisory Panel report – 9 January 2023:](#)

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO

Appendix 1 – Proposed updated Harrow Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Version 9)



**Harrow Local Development Scheme (LDS)
Version 9 – February 2023 (proposed)**

Preface

Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is a rolling three-year project plan setting out all the planning documents to be produced by the authority and the timetable for their preparation. The timetable should identify specific milestones for measuring completion of each part of the document preparation process.

This revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) replaces version 8 that was brought into effect in November 2019. This LDS (version 9) is intended to provide a timetable for the new Harrow Local Plan (2021/22-2040/41), to comply with the Localism Act 2011 and to respond to the London Plan 2021. The revision also provides the opportunity to update the list of adopted local development documents.

Important Note: This document replaces all previous versions of the Local Development Scheme previously brought into effect since June 2005 as detailed below:

| LDS version | Date brought into effect | Date cancelled / superseded |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | June 2005 | November 2006 |
| 2 | November 2006 | November 2007 |
| 3 | November 2007 | January 2011 |
| 4 | January 2011 | July 2012 |
| 5 | July 2012 | March 2014 |
| 6 | March 2014 | April 2018 |
| 7 | April 2018 | October 2019 |
| 8 | November 2019 | February 2023 (proposed) |
| 9 | February 2023 (proposed) | Current |

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4. Managing the Local Plan Process

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is a rolling three-year project plan setting out all the planning documents to be produced by the authority and the timetable for their preparation. The timetable should identify specific milestones for measuring completion of each part of the document preparation process.
- 1.2 This scheme does not include planning policies but is to be used to find out which policy documents apply in the borough and their status. If there are any ad hoc changes to the production of any documents, these will be published online at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/local-development-scheme>.
- 1.3 The Localism Act 2011 allows Local Planning Authorities to adopt their own Local Development Schemes without approval from the Secretary of State and Mayor of London. However, it makes provisions for certain interventions by the Secretary of State or Mayor of London. It also maintains the requirements to produce an LDS and keep it up to date as set out by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.4 This LDS covers the period 2022-2025 and supersedes the Council's adopted LDS published in November 2019.

Current Local Plan

- 1.5 The Council has adopted and implemented the following development plan documents (DPDs) which form Harrow's Local Plan in full:
 - (a) **Core Strategy (February 2012)** - sets out the long-term vision of how Harrow, and the places within it, should develop by 2026 and sets out the Council's spatial strategy for delivering that vision. In particular, it identifies the broad locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community facilities and other uses. It also sets the context for the other policy documents that make up the Harrow Local Plan.
 - (b) **Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan (July 2013)** - prepared jointly with the GLA and other partners, it sets out a comprehensive set of policies, proposals and site allocations for development within the Harrow and Wealdstone Intensification Area, which includes the town centres of Harrow and Wealdstone, the corridor between them, and the business land surrounding Wealdstone. It includes major redevelopment opportunities and supporting social and physical infrastructure, and sets out the planning framework promoting significant change, and where applicable detailed development management policies.

- (c) **Development Management Policies Local Plan (July 2013)** - contains detailed policies that planning applications for development or land use will be assessed against. The policies are generally criteria based and focus on giving effect to the strategic objectives and policies of the Core Strategy.
- (d) **Site Allocations Local Plan (July 2013)** - sets out the allocated sites except for those set out in the Area Action Plan. It identifies the locations and sites for specific types of development in order to ensure the vision, objectives and strategy of the Core Strategy are implemented. The broad parameters for development of each site are listed covering land use and development criteria.
- (e) **West London Waste Plan (July 2015)** - This is a joint Local Plan document prepared by the six west London Boroughs of Harrow, Brent, Ealing, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond. The joint West London Waste Plan (WLWP) identifies and safeguards sufficient sites for waste management facilities in the area to deal with West London's own waste up to 2031. The Plan also contains policies against which to assess proposals for waste management facilities.

1.6 The above are accompanied by an adopted **Policies Map** that illustrates particular land uses throughout the Borough including areas for protection such as open space and conservation areas, as well as employment and residential activities. It also identifies key sites for development ('site allocations').

1.7 These documents can be found on the Council's website: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments>.

London Plan

1.8 The London Plan 2021 also forms part of the Harrow development plan, against which planning applications are assessed. The current London Plan can be found [here](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021): <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021>.

1.9 The London Plan runs from 2019 to 2041.

Neighbourhood Plans

1.10 Neighbourhood Plans also form part of the Council's development plan. At present there are no neighbourhood plans being progressed in Harrow. Applications to designate a neighbourhood area and neighbourhood forum on Harrow Hill were made in September 2017 but withdrawn before the Council decided the applications.

2. Background to Plan Making

Local Development Framework and the Local Plan

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was first published in March 2012, substantially updated in July 2018 and further updated in February 2019 and July 2021. The NPPF provides guidance on the preparation of Local Plans, which it defines as the plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the local community. Current Core Strategies or other planning policies (i.e. those listed in paragraph 1.5 above), which under the regulations would be considered to be Development Plan Documents, form part of the Local Plan. Therefore, documents which previously were referred to as the Harrow Local Development Framework are now referred to as the Harrow Local Plan.
- 2.2 The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to produce a Local Plan for their area. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017/1244 requires Local Plan documents to be reviewed every 5 years. These can be reviewed earlier in whole or in part to respond flexibly to changing circumstances. Any additional Development Plan Documents should only be used where clearly justified. Supplementary Planning Documents should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery, and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.
- 2.3 The NPPF and associated National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- 2.4 The LDS contains details of the production timetable of the documents comprising the Local Plan.

The Local Development Scheme

- 2.5 The LDS (this document) is a 3-year project plan setting out when the existing DPDs forming the Local Plan are to be revised (or replaced in their entirety) and consulted upon. It allows the community and stakeholders to find out about the Council's future intentions for the planning of the borough and to participate in the planning making process.

Plan Making

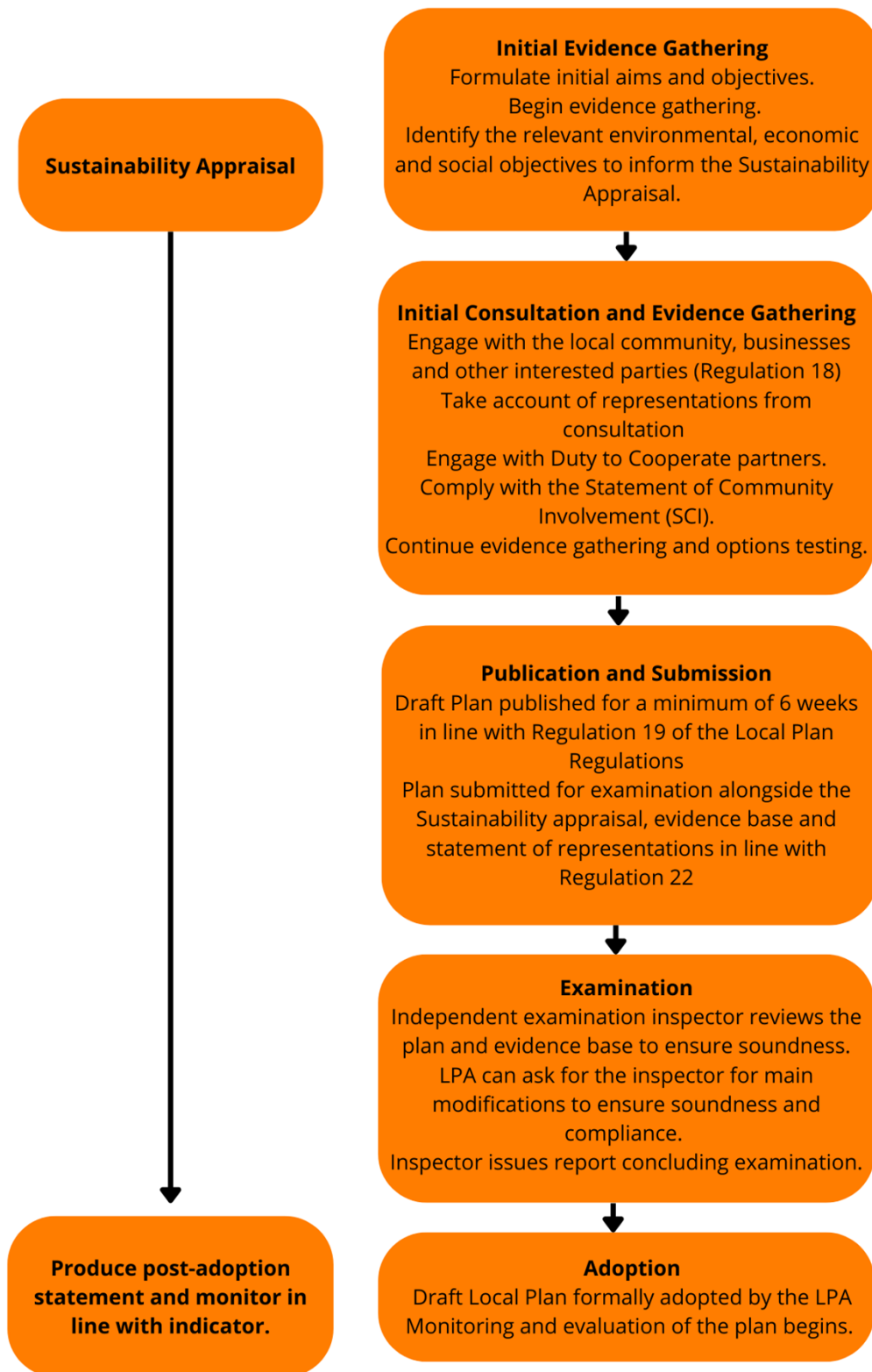
- 2.6 Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. They should be based on a proportionate evidence base which includes adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area.

- 2.7 All of the Development Plan Documents and SPDs which the Council intends to update must also be:
- (a) consistent with national planning policies (unless there is a robust reason for why Harrow requires any variation to those policies);
 - (b) in general conformity with the Mayor's adopted London Plan; and
 - (c) must conform with the Spatial Strategy within the Plan.
- 2.8 The Council is required to identify a clear chain of conformity between documents. The Mayor provides an opinion as to the general conformity of any proposed Local Plan with the London Plan. This opinion will form part of the examination of any submitted Local Plan document.
- 2.9 As noted above, there are two types of Local Development Documents: Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The plan making process for each is outlined below.

Development Plan Documents (Local Plans)

- 2.10 Development Plan Documents include adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and the London Plan. These plans are statutory documents and are scrutinised by a Planning Inspector at an examination and can comprise a Local Plan, Core Strategy, Site-specific Allocations, and Area Action Plans.
- 2.11 The Government's current intention is to have both Core Strategies and other DPDs all combined into one Local Plan document and so the Council intends to review all the adopted DPDs listed in paragraph 1.5 above (apart from the Joint Waste DPD) concurrently to enable this.
- 2.12 The key stages of Local Plans preparation are set out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Key Stages of Local Plan Preparation

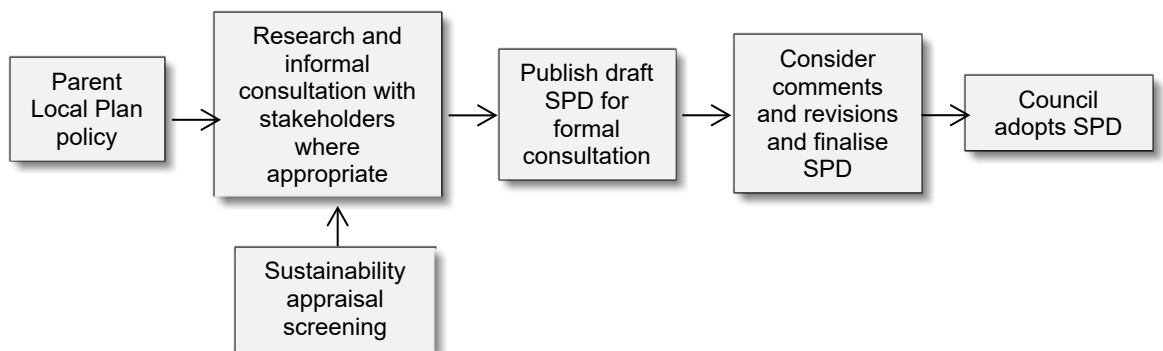


2.13 In some instances such as a full Local Plan review, Local Planning Authorities may choose to split the initial stage of statutory consultation (under Regulation 18 of the 2012 Regulations) into two rounds. The first round of consultation is on issues for the review. This will highlight and seek views on issues and alternatives for the more fundamental policy changes as well as proposed new areas of policy, but will not include detailed policy wording. This provides an opportunity for consultees to say whether they think the Council has identified the right issues for the review. The second round of consultation is on the actual draft Local Plan.

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.14 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are non-statutory plans that are not scrutinised by a Planning Inspector and can be formally adopted by the Council's Cabinet. SPDs do not set policy, but expand upon or explain how policies in the adopted Local Plan should be applied, and are capable of being a material planning consideration in planning decisions, but are not part of the development plan. The key stages of SPD preparation are set out in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – Key Stages of Supplementary Planning Document Preparation



2.15 Although no longer a statutory requirement to include SPDs in the LDS, the current SPDs are listed below in order to give a full account of Harrow's planning policies and associated supplementary guidance.

- Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas SPD (May 2008)
- Pinner Conservation Areas SPD (December 2009)
- Residential Design Guide SPD (December 2010)
- Garden Land SPD (April 2013)
- Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (October 2013)
- Locally Listed Buildings SPD (December 2013)
- Stanmore and Edgware Conservation Areas SPD (December 2013)
- Harrow School SPD (July 2015)
- Harrow Weald Conservation Areas SPD (February 2016)

- Edgware Town Centre SPD (prepared jointly with Barnet Council) (June 2021)
- 2.16 It should be noted that the Conservation Area SPDs listed above include Character Appraisals and Management Strategies for each individual Conservation Area covered by the SPD, as appendices. These appendices are updated more frequently than the overall SPD.
- 2.17 The Council intends to prepare and revise a number of SPDs over the coming years, especially to aid in site delivery. The following is a proposed list of the further SPDs:
- Tall Buildings SPD
 - Small Sites Design Code SPD (including householder extensions and conversions).
- 2.18 The timetable for the production or revisions of SPDs is provided on the relevant pages of the Council's website.

Supporting evidence and other planning documents

- 2.19 Whilst not forming part of the Local Plan, the Council has also produced other supporting documents to aid in the preparation or implementation of Local Plan policies:
- (a) A detailed evidence base
 - (b) The Statement of Community Involvement (revised and adopted March 2013) (proposed to be updated in February 2023)
 - (d) Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - (e) Local Plan Policies Map (Hard and online versions last updated July 2013)
 - (f) Community Infrastructure Levy: Charging Schedule (Implemented 1st October 2013)
 - (g) Authority's Monitoring Report

Evidence Base

- 2.20 In order to carry out the preparation of the Local Plan, the Council prepares and maintains an up-to-date, sound evidence base. Necessary research has already been conducted, and will be supplemented by research undertaken by partners, other organisations, and the community. Providing a sound and comprehensive evidence base is fundamental to developing sound planning documents.
- 2.21 The current Harrow Local Plan evidence base can be found on the Council's website at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/london-development-framework-evidence-base>.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

- 2.22 A significant concern of planning policies is to improve community and stakeholder involvement from the outset so they reflect a collective vision. This commitment is reinforced by the requirement for all Local Authorities to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI details how the community and stakeholders will be involved in the preparation, alteration and review of the Local Plan, as well as the consideration of minor and major planning applications.
- 2.23 The Harrow SCI was first adopted in August 2006. Given the changes to the planning system since 2006, the Harrow SCI was revised, updated and re-adopted in March 2013 and is available on the Council website at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/local-development-scheme?documentId=12692&categoryId=210273>.
- 2.24 It is proposed to update the SCI in 2023, in advance of consultation on the review of the Local Plan identified in this LDS.

Local Development Order

- 2.25 Local Development Orders (LDO) were introduced with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and allow local authorities to extend permitted development rights for certain forms of development within a defined area (i.e. to remove the need to obtain planning permission for the types of development stated in the LDO). There are no current LDOs in operation in the Borough. The Council adopted a LDO in North Harrow, which started on 1 July 2012. The LDO was however only limited to a three year period and has therefore now expired. It was not renewed as it was considered to have achieved its objective to reduce the level of vacant premises within the centre, relative to other centres in the borough.

Sustainable Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.26 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is required for all Local Plan documents. It is an integral component of all stages of plan preparation. The purpose of a SA is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. The SA embraces economic, environmental and social objectives, and therefore has a wider scope than Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which is required by EU Directive (2001/42/EC) and only concentrates on environmental effects.
- 2.27 Work on producing a Local Plan cannot proceed without corresponding work on the SA/SEA. Both the draft Local Plan and the SA will be made publicly available for consultation at the same time and comments invited on both. The findings of the SA in informing each policy within the plan will be a material consideration in determining soundness of the documents at the examination in public.

Local Plan Policies Map

- 2.28 The Policies Map identifies site allocations and areas of planning constraint, such as the Green Belt and other local and national environmental designations. The policies map is updated as the Local Plan is prepared or revised so as to illustrate, graphically, the application of the policies of the Local Plan. The Policies Map can be found at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/adopted-policies-map?documentId=12656&categoryId=210273>.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.29 Harrow's CIL came into effect on 1st October 2013 and enables the Council to levy a charge on certain types of new development to help fund improvements to local infrastructure such as schools, transport, green spaces, health and leisure facilities necessary to support new development and ensure these create sustainable communities. Harrow's CIL is an additional levy on top of the London Mayor's existing Crossrail CIL (which was revised in 2019). Further details on the Harrow CIL are available on the Council's website at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/community-infrastructure-levy>.
- 2.30 It is intended that the Harrow CIL charging schedule is updated in parallel with the Local Plan review, since development viability considerations are integral to both.

Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR)

- 2.31 The Localism Act 2011 requires monitoring of both the production and implementation of the plans through Monitoring Reports. The AMR is generally published yearly and assesses:
- (a) The state of the Borough's environment, identifying development trends, patterns of land-use, as well as transport and population/ socio-economic trends in order to provide a 'baseline' for sustainability appraisal, the identification of issues or problems and the context reviewing development plan policies or policy omissions;
 - (b) The implementation of the Local Development Scheme and whether revisions to the scheme are necessary;
 - (c) The extent to which the development plan objectives and policies are being achieved; and
 - (d) Development management performance.
- 2.32 Harrow's Authority's Monitoring Reports are available on the Council's website at: <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/planning-developments/local-development-scheme?documentId=12692&categoryId=210273>.

3. Harrow's Local Plan

Current Plan

3.1 The schedule below outlines the current Harrow Local Plan and indicates how these relate to each other and with national and regional planning policy (i.e. the 'chain of conformity').

Harrow's Local Plan

| Document Title | Statu | Brief Description | Geographic Coverage | Chain of Conformity | Date of Adoption |
|--|-------|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Core Strategy | DPD | Sets out the Council's Spatial Vision, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Policies. It paints the 'big picture' for future change in Harrow, taking account of social, environmental and economic issues. | Borough Wide | General conformity with the National Planning Policy Statement and the London Plan All other LDDs will conform with Core Strategy | 16 th February 2012 |
| Development Management Policies | DPD | Contains detailed criteria based policies that planning applications for development or land use will be assessed against | Borough Wide | To conform with Core Strategy | 4th July 2013 |
| Site Allocations | DPD | Identifies the locations and sites, except for those set out in the Area Action Plan, for specific types of development in order to ensure the vision, objectives and strategy of the Core Strategy are implemented. | Borough outside of the Harrow & Wealdstone Intensification Area | To conform with Core Strategy | 4th July 2013 |
| Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan | DPD | Jointly prepared with the GLA and other partners, it sets out a comprehensive set of policies, proposals and site allocations for development within the Harrow & Wealdstone Intensification Area | Harrow & Wealdstone Intensification Area | To conform with Core Strategy and the London Plan designation | 4th July 2013 |
| West London Waste DPD | DPD | Joint waste plan for West London, identifying and safeguarding sufficient sites for waste management facilities in the area to deal with West London's own waste up to 2031. | West London Wide | General conformity with the National Planning Policy Statement | July 2015 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------|--|
| | | | | and the London Plan | |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------|--|

Review of the Harrow Local Plan

- 3.2 As noted in the Local Plan schedule above, the Council has a fully adopted Local Plan, comprising five development plan documents and accompanying Policies Map. However, it is a requirement of the Government to keep Local Plans up to date. Given the Mayor of London has produced a new London Plan, the Council intends to update (and consolidate) all the documents forming the current Local Plan simultaneously to ensure continued conformity with the London Plan. The updated documents will also reflect recent changes to national policy (NPPF updates and any relevant legislative changes) and ensure Harrow can continue to deliver upon its housing target.

Approach to the review

- 3.3 A number of policies in the Local Plan will need to change to take account of the legislative and policy changes listed above, as well as changed circumstances in the borough and new evidence. A small number of new policies are also likely to be needed. However, many of the existing policies in the Local Plan are considered to remain current and fit for purpose (based on continuing conformity with national and regional policy and ongoing monitoring through the Authority's Monitoring Report) and these will be incorporated into the new Local Plan. Given the scale of the proposed increase in the London Plan housing target for Harrow, the nature of the proposed source of this additional housing (i.e. 'suburban intensification') as highlighted in the new London Plan, it is considered that a full review of the current Harrow Local Plan is required.
- 3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the Government's preferred approach is for each local planning authority to prepare a single Local Plan for its area (or a joint document with neighbouring areas). This is a significant change from the previous Government's approach of a number of separate documents comprising the Local Development Framework, evident by the list of Harrow Local Plan documents listed above. While additional Local Plans can be produced, for example a separate site allocations document or Area Action Plan, there should be a clear justification for doing so. It is therefore envisaged that the new Local Plan will involve a reduced number of documents, with the Core Strategy, Development Management Policies and Site Allocations being combined into a single document. The existing Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan may remain a separate, updated document, or alternatively be included in the main Local Plan document.
- 3.5 With a single Local Plan being prepared, the document will contain strategic priorities (i.e. housing, employment etc) and strategic policies to deliver these; these strategic policies will be clearly distinguished from non-strategic policies, as required by the new National Planning Policy Framework.

Timetable for the updating of the Harrow Local Plan

3.6 Outlined below is the proposed timeframe for updating the Local Plan:

| Harrow Local Plan | |
|---|--|
| Role and Subject | <p>Adopted between 2012 and 2013, the table above (at paragraph 3.1) outlines the role and subject of each of the constituent documents making up the Harrow Local Plan. Since adoption, new growth requirements for London and Harrow have been set out in the London Plan 2021 and there have been some significant changes to national planning policy and guidance and permitted development rights / changes to use classes. A review is therefore required to update, in particular, the quantum of housing to be delivered and policies relating to the retention of employment land, as well as to take account of new evidence from updated evidence base studies.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the new Local Plan will replace and consolidate into one document the existing Core Strategy, Development Management Policies and Site Allocations documents. The Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan will also be updated / replaced, but may potentially remain a separate document.</p> <p>The Policies Map will be updated to reflect the policies in the new Local Plan, including any changes to their extent.</p> <p>It is intended that the new Harrow Local Plan will align with the same planning period as the London Plan 2021, namely to 2041.</p> |
| Geographical Coverage | Borough Wide |
| Status | DPD |
| Conformity Chain | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) London Plan 2021 |
| Key Milestones | |
| Evidence base preparation | January 2018 – June 2023 |
| Regulation 18: Consultation on Draft Local Plan | September – October 2023 (8 weeks) |
| Regulations 19 and 20: Pre-submission consultation (six weeks for representations) | September- October 2024 (6 weeks) |
| Regulation 22: Submission of the Local Plan and representations to Secretary of State | January 2025 |
| Independent Examination – hearings | January-November 2025 |
| Receive Inspector’s report | November 2025 |
| Adoption | December 2025 (at the latest) |

3.7 The proposed timetable for the review of the Harrow Local Plan is set out above. Some aspects of this timetable are not within the control of

the Council, particularly the timing of the examination hearing and the length of time the Inspector takes to consider matters and issue his/her report.

4 Managing the Local Plan Process

Governance

- 4.1 The effective implementation of this LDS will require the consideration of the most effective governance support procedures. According to the Council's constitution, full Council approval is required prior to any consultation or submission of the Local Plan. Harrow Council operates a Cabinet Structure. Prior to documents being agreed by full Council, the Local Plan must first be reported to the Planning Policy Advisory Panel (Cabinet panel). The Panel's responsibility is to give detailed consideration and input of matters relating to Local Plan and make recommendations to the Cabinet (and ultimately full Council). The Planning Policy Advisory Panel is also charged with overseeing the preparation and implementation of the LDS.
- 4.2 On occasions the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee may 'call in' decisions, prior to being considered by Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is charged with ensuring the Council is accountable for its decisions processes.
- 4.3 The timeframe necessary to comply with the Council's in house processes and procedures has been included within timeline given for preparing the Local Plan, although where necessary this will include special committee meetings.

Staff and Resource Allocated to the Preparing the Local Plan

- 4.4 The Council's Planning Policy Team will take the lead on preparing all Local Plan documents. This includes the Local Plan and most SPDs but also the SA/SEA, thematic studies, and the preparation of evidence base studies to support the Local Plan. Where appropriate, the Council will participate in joint evidence base work with the West London Alliance in order to gather evidence at a sub-regional level, respond to its duty to co-operate with relevant stakeholders, strive for a co-ordinated and coherent approach to planning within West London and benefit from the economies of scale that arise from joint-working.
- 4.5 The Policy Team will be supported where necessary by the Development Management, Regeneration and Design, specialist officers within the Council, and the Economic Development and Research teams. Where necessary, specialist external consultants may also be used, especially for technical background evidence base studies.
- 4.6 Overall management responsibility for the Local Plan will be with the Chief Planning Officer. It will be the responsibility of the Chief Planning Officer to allocate sufficient staff from within the Planning Service and to negotiate for corporate staff resources where necessary.

Risks

4.7 Outlined below are key risks identified in progressing the Local Plan review and meeting the timeframes in this LDS:

- (a) *The “soundness” of DPDs (Local Plan documents)* – to be found sound, Local Plan documents are to comply with statutory process, government policy and be in general conformity with the London Plan. Since the last LDS was prepared significant legislative changes have taken place and others continue to emerge. In reviewing Harrow’s Local Plan it will be necessary to ensure that Harrow’s documents continue to take account of changes as and when they occur to ensure that they remain applicable come adoption and implementation.
- (b) *Committee process* – The lead in times for Local Plan documents is significant, and involves significant staff resource. In some instances it may be necessary to hold additional meetings of the Planning Policy Advisory Panel, Cabinet or Full Council to ensure reporting timeframes and ultimately Local Plan milestones are met.
- (c) *Evidence base* – A key requirement of the Local Plan is that it is based on a robust and up-to-date evidence base. Significant resource has been invested in compiling a robust evidence base in support of the current Local Plan and the proposed review. It will be necessary to undertake a review of evidence base studies due to changing circumstances (e.g. to take account of the impact of office to residential prior approval changes of use on office supply). However, if the timetable for revising the Local Plan slips or is slowed, there is a risk that, by the time of submission, the evidence on which the document is based would be out of date. A further risk arises where reforms to the planning system are proposed, and prior to primary legislation being enacted, such changes are given effect through amendments to national planning policy. Such changes often result in requirements upon local planning authorities to prepare new studies to assess and address relevant national issues at the local level.

The above risks are not new to planning policy, and the Council will need to manage the Local Plan timetable whilst ensuring the supporting evidence base remains as up-to-date and robust as is necessary

- (d) *Resourcing* – resourcing within the Planning Policy Team is currently significantly less than that available when the current Local Plan was prepared. Difficulties in identifying additional funding and recruiting suitably qualified and experienced planners has resulted in slippages in the timeframes for the Local Plan review since the last LDS (Version 8 - November

2019). Adequate resourcing in terms of funding and ability to recruit and retain professional planners to progress the Local Plan remain an ongoing and significant risk to the achievement of the timetable set out in this LDS and the soundness of any submitted Local Plan. Assumptions relating to resources required to meet the timetable in this LDS were set out in the Cabinet report seeking its adoption and will be monitored as the plan progresses.

- (e) *Implementation and Delivery* – For plans to be found ‘sound’ they must be considered to be deliverable. This will be managed through justification in the supporting text to policies but may also require other corporate plans and strategies to clearly articulate the reasons for this. The Local Plan policies are subject to monitoring and reporting and the policies can be reviewed to take account of changes in circumstances. The Government has announced potential punitive measures for not delivering against housing targets within the London Plan / Local Plan, including the requirement to prepare action plans, identification of additional buffer requirements within the borough’s five year housing supply, the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and intervention by Government in the Local Plan process.
- (f) *Proposed Changes to National Planning Legislation* – The biggest risk to the council’s ability to progress the new Local Plan is the proposed changes to national planning legislation. This involves changes to the NPPF, the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill, and the proposed Planning and Infrastructure Bill. Further proposals / legislation are also likely to come forward during the life of this LDS / preparation of the new Local Plan. These changes may cause major disruption to the timeframes proposed in this LDS, particularly if changes are committed to legislation after Regulation 18 or 19 consultations have taken place. Changes would need to be made to the draft Local Plan in line with legislation and subsequently, additional rounds of consultation would be required. Known and future changes to legislation and policy frameworks will be continuously monitored in order to try to mitigate any risks by proactively responding to changes that impact upon the Local Plan (content and process).
- (g) *Electoral changes* – Throughout the Local Plan update timeline, there are likely to be several elections at National, London Mayoral and Council levels which may necessitate revisions to emerging or previously agreed elements of the draft new Local Plan with associated impacts upon the timetable set in this LDS. At a local level, the cross-party Planning Policy Advisory Panel will seek to mitigate the impact of any changes in political administration.

Monitoring and Review

- 4.8 The LDS will be subject to both annual and in-year monitoring to ensure the timetables outlined are being met. Where this indicates otherwise, the Planning Policy Team will analyse the reasons for this and determine whether actions can be taken to bring the Local Plan back into line with the programme. Where the analysis highlights significant variance that cannot be overcome, the LDS will need to be revised accordingly to ensure it remains up to date.