

**Wards Affected:**

All Wards

**ITEM 9****CABINET****21 FEBRUARY 2017****APPROVAL OF DRAFT PLAN:MK FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Gifford (Cabinet Member for Place)

Report Sponsor: Anna Rose (Service Director (Growth, Economy and Culture))

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**Executive Summary:**

This report asks that Cabinet approves Draft Plan:MK (**Annex**) for a 12-week public consultation. Draft Plan:MK has been prepared using the outputs of previous rounds of consultation, a range of background evidence work and the input of a cross-party Member working group. Feedback from the proposed consultation will be used to prepare the final version of Plan:MK.

**1. Recommendation(s)**

- 1.1 That the Draft Plan:MK be published for a 12-week period of public consultation and engagement.
- 1.2 That the Service Director (Growth, Economy and Culture), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Place, be authorised to make any minor necessary amendments to Draft Plan:MK when producing the consultation version of the Draft Plan:MK.

**2. Issues**

- 2.1 Plan:MK will be the new Local Plan for Milton Keynes up to 2031. It will set out a vision and development strategy for the future of the Borough, and include development management policies and site allocations for all sizes and types of development to help deliver that vision. Plan:MK will review and replace the existing Core Strategy (adopted 2013) and the saved policies from the Local Plan (adopted 2005).
- 2.2 The draft version of Plan:MK sets out the Council's preferred strategy for meeting the Borough's needs until 2031. A 15-year lifespan for the plan has been chosen as it is anticipated that the plan will need to be reviewed prior to that end date in order to be able to respond to a number of emerging strategies and infrastructure developments, notably the MK Futures 2050 work, progress on East-West Rail and on the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor. This would be consistent with national planning policy which states that local plans should be drawn up over an appropriate

timescale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, should take account of longer term requirements and be kept up to date.

- 2.3 Draft Plan:MK is not the final plan but represents the Council's preferred approach based on the evidence currently available and the results of the previous consultations in 2014 and 2016. The plan has been prepared with input from a cross-party Member working group.
- 2.4 At this stage in the plan's preparation, the consultation will be asking for views and feedback on what the plan ought to contain and, where a preferred approach has been identified, whether that is appropriate. The responses to this consultation document will, together with the outputs from ongoing evidence studies, shape the final version of the Plan which is expected to be published for a final round of consultation at the end of 2017.
- 2.5 Briefing sessions were held with Ward Councillors, parish councils and the political groups in December 2016 at which the emerging draft plan and possible strategic development areas were introduced. Following those meetings and taking account of the emerging strategies outlined in paragraph 2.2 above, the end date of Plan:MK has been amended to 2031 and the housing numbers and resulting site requirements have been revised.

### 3. **Options**

- 3.1 The recommended option is to approve Draft Plan:MK appended in the **Annex** for a 12-week consultation period, as the next stage in the plan preparation process.
- 3.2 An alternative option would be to wait for further progress to be made on the emerging strategies and infrastructure developments, referred to in paragraph 2.2 above. However, this would cause an unacceptable and unnecessary delay to the Plan:MK process which, if not progressed as planned by 2017/8, would carry a risk that the Government would intervene. The Plan:MK preparation programme will allow for any new policy developments and announcements (such as the Housing White Paper, published on 7 February, 2017) to be taken into account when the final version of the plan is being prepared and, as explained in section 2 above, it is anticipated that the plan will require an early review in order to take account of these significant projects. The recommended option in paragraph 3.1 above therefore allows for momentum in the preparation of Plan:MK to be maintained.

### 4. **Implications**

#### 4.1 Policy

Plan:MK, when adopted, will replace the Core Strategy and the saved policies in the existing Local Plan. It will form the key part of the Development Plan for Milton Keynes and will be used in the determination of planning applications.

Plan:MK will also be a key corporate document and will help inform decisions around investment and service provision for the Council and partners.

## 4.2 Resources and Risk

The Core Strategy adopted in 2013 put in place a requirement for an early review of that document, including an aim to have Plan:MK in place by 2015. While this has not been achieved, good progress is being made and this consultation document is the next stage in that process. The timetable to prepare Plan:MK is challenging, in part due to the 2017 Government intervention date mentioned in paragraph 3.2 put in place by the Productivity Plan. The Housing White Paper, published on 7 February 2017, strengthens the importance of all local authorities having up to date local plans in place.

### Cost of Plan:MK

This will be mainly resourced by staff time for most of the production of the plan but some specialist consultancy evidence will be required, such as for the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Retail Capacity Study. Funding for these reports will be 'drawn down' as they are required from the budgeted one-off expenditures reserves of about £380,000, but the onus will be on the Development Plans team to provide as much evidence as possible to support Plan:MK and its policies. Approximately £201,000 from these reserves has been spent in 2016/17.

N	Capital	Y	Revenue	N	Accommodation
N	IT	N	Medium Term Plan	N	Asset Management

## 4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

Plan:MK will include policies relating to sustainability and carbon and energy management, but the decision has no direct impact.

## 4.4 Legal

Plan:MK is being prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

This consultation stage forms part of Regulation 18 (preparing a local plan) of these regulations and is an important stage in ensuring that the final plan is sound and robust, and will meet the requirements of the regulations when it reaches the Public Examination stage.

There are no real identifiable risks to the Council should it take the recommended option.

## 4.5 Other Implications

The consultation on Draft Plan:MK will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (March 2014). Engagement during the 12-week consultation period will use a suite of methods, and will encourage involvement from a wide range of stakeholders.

N	Equalities/Diversity	N	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	Y	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers: Plan:MK Topic Papers, September-December 2014, available online at [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)  
Strategic Development Directions consultation 2016, summary of consultation responses available online at: [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)  
Draft Plan:MK Sustainability Appraisal report and non-technical summary, available online at: [www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK](http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/PlanMK)

Annex: Draft Plan:MK document for consultation