



## Special Meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 7 December 2017
<b>Time:</b>	4.00 pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Cabinet Briefing Room - Wallasey Town Hall

**Contact Officer:** Patrick Sebastian  
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### AGENDA

**1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST  
/ PARTY WHIP**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members are reminded that they should also declare whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

**2. MEETING REQUISITION (Pages 1 - 2)**

**3. WIRRAL LOCAL PLAN - LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE  
(Pages 3 - 10)**

Report of the Assistant Director Environmental Services.

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Wirral Council  
Town Hall  
Brighton Street  
Wallasey  
Wirral CH44 8ED

By Email

0151 691 8652

21 November 2017

Dear Mr. McCourt

As per Standing Order 26 (2) we the undersigned members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee wish to requisition an urgent special meeting of the Committee.

This meeting is being called to discuss the recent letter, attached to this requisition, where the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government sets out that government has started the formal process of considering intervention for Wirral Council because of Council's failure to adopt a 2004 Act Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Berry	
Andrew Hodson	
Ian Lewis	
Tracey Pilgrim	
Adam Sykes	

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## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 7 December 2017

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>WIRRAL LOCAL PLAN – LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

Sajid Javed, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, wrote to the Leader of the Council on 16 November 2017, seeking further information about the Council's progress on plan-making.

A copy of his letter is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

A copy of the current timetable for the preparation of the Council's Local Plan is attached at Appendix 2.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

- (1) That the report is noted

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 To allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a letter from the Secretary of State seeking further information on plan-making in Wirral.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 There are no alternative options. A reply to the Secretary of State is invited by 31 January 2018.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Secretary of State wrote to the Council on 16 November 2017, seeking further information about the Council's progress on plan-making. A copy of his letter is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 A copy of the current timetable for the preparation of the Council's Local Plan is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 A response to the Secretary of State is invited by 31 January 2018.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from responding to the letter from the Secretary of State.
- 4.2 The Council may be required to reimburse the Secretary of State for any expenditure he incurs, if the Secretary of State later chooses to intervene in the plan-making process in Wirral.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Secretary of State has the power to intervene in the plan-making process in Wirral.
- 5.2 The Local Plan must be prepared in line with the statutory process set out in national legislation and can only be adopted by the Council if it is found to be legally compliant and sound by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 A reply to the Secretary of State can be made within existing resources in Environmental Services.

### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The letter attached at Appendix 1 to this report does not specify the type of intervention that the Secretary of State may in future consider appropriate following the Council's response to his letter.

## 8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

8.1 There is no requirement for public consultation for any response to the Secretary of State.

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report does not have any equality implications.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**           **David Ball**  
  **Assistant Director Environmental Services**  
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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Letter from the Secretary of State dated 16 November 2017

Appendix 2 – Proposed timetable for the Core Strategy Local Plan

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

The previous stages in the preparation of the Council's Core Strategy Local Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/core-strategy-local-plan>

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet – Core Strategy Local Plan – Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update	18 July 2016 (Minute 31)
Cabinet – Core Strategy Local Plan – Report of Further Consultation on Housing Need and Land Supply	27 February 2017 (Minute 96)

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Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

Cllr Phil Davies

**The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP**

*Secretary of State for Communities and Local  
Government*

***Department for Communities and Local  
Government***

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16 November 2017

Dear Phil

## **LOCAL PLAN INTERVENTION**

On 7 February we published our housing White Paper in which we made clear that the housing market in this country is broken, and the cause is very simple: for too long, we haven't built enough homes. We have identified three systemic problems: not enough local authorities planning for the homes they need; house building that is simply too slow; and a construction industry that is too reliant on a small number of big players.

Up-to-date plans, including local plans are essential because they provide clarity to communities and developers about where homes should be built and where not, so that development is planned rather than the result of speculative applications. At present too few places have an up-to-date plan.

On 21 July 2015 we made a Written Ministerial Statement to the House on this same subject. I am writing to you as your authority has yet to adopt a 2004 Act Local Plan and to express my concerns about the lack of progress your authority has made on plan-making.

Local planning authorities are required to publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out when an authority expects to reach key milestones in the plan-making process, and the timetable for producing documents to maintain an up to date plan. In the 13 years that have passed since the 2004 Act was introduced your Council has failed to meet the deadlines set out in that timetable.

The February 2017 Housing White Paper set out that we will prioritise intervention

where:

- the least progress in plan-making has been made
- policies in plans had not been kept up to date
- there was higher housing pressure; and
- intervention would have the greatest impact in accelerating Local Plan production

My decisions on intervention will also be informed by the wider planning context in each area (specifically, the extent to which authorities are working cooperatively to put strategic plans in place, and the potential impact that not having a plan has on neighbourhood planning activity).

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to outline any exceptional circumstances, by 31st January 2018, which, in your view, justify the failure of your Council to produce a Local Plan. In addition to this explanation, I would like to hear of any measures that the authority has taken, or intends to take, to accelerate plan publication.

My officials have been engaging with your officers to discuss the progression of your Plan and they will write to set out further detail and next steps.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Javid', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

**THE RT HON SAJID JAVID MP**

## Core Strategy Timetable

<b>Document Name:</b> Core Strategy Local Plan		<b>Status:</b> Development Plan Document
<b>Purpose:</b> To provide the long-term vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the Borough and the framework for future Development Plan Documents		
<b>Coverage:</b> Borough wide		<b>Time Period:</b> 15 years
<b>Chain of Conformity:</b> National Planning Policy Framework		<b>Post Adoption Monitoring &amp; Review:</b> Annual Monitoring Report 5 Yearly Assessment
<b>Departmental Responsibility:</b> Environmental Services (Forward Planning)		<b>Contact:</b> Andrew Fraser, Forward Planning Manager <a href="mailto:forwardplanning@wirral.gov.uk">forwardplanning@wirral.gov.uk</a>
<b>Key Milestones</b>		<b>Key Stakeholders (Regulation 2 bodies):</b> Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Sefton Borough Council Liverpool City Council Cheshire West and Chester Council Flintshire County Council Other Liverpool City Region Authorities Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Liverpool City Region Local Nature Partnership Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service Homes and Communities Agency Highways England Merseytravel Environment Agency Natural England Natural Resources Wales Marine Management Organisation Historic England Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner North West Ambulance Service Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service HM Coastguard and RNLI Office of Rail Regulation and Network Rail Civil Aviation Authority Health and Safety Executive National Health Service Organisations Conservation Area Advisory Committees Local Amenity Societies and Friends Groups Wirral Community Networks Wirral Wildlife Developers and Landowners Utilities and Infrastructure Providers Local Business Organisations Neighbourhood Forums Other General Consultation Bodies
<b>Preparation (Regulation 18):</b>		
<b>Commencement:</b>	July 2005*	
<b>SA Scoping:</b>	July 2006*	
<b>Initial Consultation:</b>	September 2007*	
<b>Issues Vision and Objectives:</b>	February 2009*	
<b>Spatial Options: (Regulation 18)</b>	January 2010*	
<b>Preferred Options: (Regulation 18)</b>	November 2010*	
<b>Settlement Areas: (Regulation 18)</b>	January 2012*	
<b>Publication (Regulation 19)</b>		
<b>Proposed Submission Draft:</b>	December 2012*	
<b>Initial Modifications:</b>	July 2013*	
<b>Further Modifications:</b>	December 2014*	
<b>Further consultation on housing needs and land supply</b>	August 2016*	
<b>Development Options Review</b>	July 2017 to July 2019	
<b>Re-Publication: (Regulation 19)</b>	September 2019	
<b>Representations: (Regulation 20)</b>	September/ October 2019	
<b>Submission (Regulation 22)</b>		
<b>Submission: (Regulation 22)</b>	January 2020	
<b>Pre-Hearing Meeting:</b>	March 2020	
<b>Hearing: (Regulation 24)</b>	May 2020	
<b>Main Modifications (if required)</b>	September 2020	
<b>Inspectors Report: (Regulation 25)</b>	December 2020	
<b>Adoption: (Regulation 26)</b>	January 2021	

An asterisk (\*) indicates stages that have already been completed.

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