



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

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

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.

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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)

Council Meeting	Date
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)