

North Somerset Council

Report to the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 22 November 2023

Subject of Report: Infrastructure Delivery Plan progress update

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Natalie Richards

Key Decision: No

Reason:

Whilst the eventual delivery of infrastructure detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will have a significant effect on communities living or working in the area comprising two or more wards and result in expenditure of £500,000 or over, the preparation of the draft document at this stage does not comprise a key decision.

Recommendations

To consider and endorse the proposed approach to identifying infrastructure requirements associated with the local plan in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

1. Summary of Report

1.1 Alongside the pre-submission (Reg 19) local plan the Council must publish a draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This report sets out the framework for producing the IDP and the key milestones for preparation of the document.

2. Policy

2.1 The local plan provides a spatial strategy for growth that will guide new development for the plan period 2024 to 2039. The plan also identifies proposed allocations for housing, employment and other uses and the infrastructure that is required to deliver those schemes in a sustainable way.

3. Details

3.1 Planning regulations require the production of an IDP alongside the local plan. The IDP will set out the national and local context in relation to infrastructure provision and the importance of timely delivery within the plan period. It will detail the infrastructure that is required to support the existing and future needs and demands for North Somerset to accommodate a growing population. The IDP will be accompanied by a schedule listing each of the requirements, their prioritisation, risks, who will deliver the schemes and indicative costs and funding sources where known.

3.2 The IDP is a document that evolves throughout the plan making process. It will set out the infrastructure schemes that are required to support delivery of the proposed growth contained within the Local Plan at each stage of consultation. The most

recently published draft was dated March 2022 and that version is listed as a background paper at the end of this report. Whilst this iteration provides a useful guide to how schemes are presented in the IDP it should be noted that the schemes listed reflect the proposals in earlier versions of the local plan and therefore not all are proposed to be taken forward in the next draft.

- 3.3 On the 18 October 2023 Executive Committee resolved that the pre-submission (Reg 19) version of the local plan presented was approved for publication and public consultation following any agreed amendments to the document. An updated version of the IDP will be published alongside the consultation version of the local plan.
- 3.4 The term 'infrastructure' covers the full range of services and facilities required in an area. This includes roads, public transport provision, cycle and walking routes, schools, health facilities, flood resilience measures, essential utilities, digital connectivity and open spaces. New developments, including cumulative impacts, will inevitably place additional demand on existing infrastructure and therefore investment is required to ensure that communities are supported with new and enhanced infrastructure to ensure that we achieve sustainable development. This investment is an essential part of placemaking, particularly in the context of supporting a shift to carbon reduction, enabling new and existing communities to meet their day to day needs efficiently and with minimal impact upon the environment.
- 3.5 Infrastructure planning and delivery will support our economy as well as our residents. New and improved digital infrastructure, utilities and transport infrastructure are crucial to support economic growth that will help delivery of business growth within the district.
- 3.6 The IDP will categorise infrastructure into 5 sections:
 - Transport
 - Education
 - Environmental
 - Social
 - Utilities

Transport infrastructure is essential to everyday lives and is vital for a functioning and productive economy. This category includes the highway network, public transport provision and active travel infrastructure to promote walking and cycling. The IDP will include a range of schemes from those that are strategic, such as the Banwell Bypass, down to smaller schemes such as railway car park extensions.

Education infrastructure covers primary, secondary, special educational needs and early years provision. New schools will be required as a direct result of the growth proposed in the local plan.

Environmental infrastructure includes green spaces, parks and open spaces, biodiversity sites, flood resilience measures, sustainable drainage schemes and noise mitigation works.

Social infrastructure covers healthcare provision, community facilities, leisure offerings and wider housing types such as older people's supported living schemes.

Utilities infrastructure includes traditional essential services such as electricity, gas, water, waste management, sewerage and digital infrastructure connectivity. Renewable energy generation will also sit within this category.

3.7 National policy requires there to be a reasonable prospect of delivery for any scheme that is identified, within the timeframe envisaged. Work is ongoing to ensure that the evidence base justifies inclusion of all schemes that have been identified.

3.8 Within each category the schemes will be prioritised. We proposed the following three levels of priority:

- **Critical infrastructure**

This is infrastructure that must be planned or provided to enable development to take place. Often these schemes are needed to unlock development sites and are most commonly transport or utilities schemes. Failure to provide critical infrastructure would result in significant delays to delivery or risk development not taking place at all.

- **Essential infrastructure**

This level of priority will be attributed to schemes that are required for development to take place in a timely and sustainable manner. Failure to deliver items in this category would be unlikely to prevent development physically taking place, but the consequences of not delivering these schemes alongside the developments would be severe. Examples of essential infrastructure are education, healthcare provision and open space.

- **Desirable infrastructure**

This is infrastructure that is required to deliver the objectives of the plan but would be unlikely to prevent development taking place if schemes did not occur within the short to medium term.

3.9 A broad level of risk will also be attributed to each scheme. The categories of risk are as follows:

- **High risk**

This category applies where there are fundamental constraints associated with the delivery of the scheme, such as a significant funding gap, no site identified or land assembly issues.

- **Moderate risk**

This category will apply if there are some constraints or uncertainties around delivery of the scheme.

- **Low risk**

This category will show that there is a reasonable degree of certainty around delivery of the scheme, such as case where costs are known, funding is in place and there are no significant objections to a proposal.

3.10 Delivery of infrastructure in a timely manner is essential to achieve sustainable development. Work is ongoing with other services and delivery partners to identify which schemes are needed and by when and how they will be funded.

3.11 The updated draft IDP and accompanying schedules will be published as supporting documents alongside the Pre-submission local plan on 27th November. Representations can be made by residents, town and parish councils, the development industry, service providers and any other interested parties.

- 3.12 It is proposed that the full draft is also considered by the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy Scrutiny Panel at a future meeting before submission of the local plan and the associated evidence to the Planning Inspectorate in the spring.
- 3.13 The following timetable sets out the key milestones for progressing the IDP.

Stage	Date	Comments
Revise draft IDP to reflect schemes proposed in pre-submission plan	Ongoing	The schedules of infrastructure required are being updated in conjunction with other service areas and partners.
Public consultation on pre-submission plan	27 November 2023 – 22 January 2024	The draft IDP will be published as a supporting document.
Scrutiny of IDP and further engagement with members and town and parish councils	Ongoing	The draft IDP will be considered by scrutiny panel.
Submission of local plan and evidence base	Spring 2024	An amended draft IDP taking account of any comments received through the scrutiny process and/or public consultation will be produced and submitted alongside the local plan.
Examination	Summer/Autumn 2024	The draft IDP will be tested alongside the local plan through the examination process.
Local Plan adoption and publication of final IDP	Following examination	Once the content of the local plan is finalised and adopted, the full final IDP will be published.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The draft IDP is being prepared by the Planning Policy Team in conjunction with internal and external stakeholders. As explained above, a round of public consultation on the draft will take place alongside the Pre-Submission Regulation 19 Local Plan document from 27 November 2023 to 22 January 2024. The IDP will continue to evolve throughout the plan-making process and the subsequent examination of the Local Plan as set out in the timetable above.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The IDP itself is prepared within existing budgets. The document will, once finalised, set out full costings for all infrastructure requirements that are needed to unlock and support sustainable development.

Costs

Work is ongoing to identify all scheme costs.

Funding

Funding sources to deliver the infrastructure identified in the IDP will include development contributions in the form of S106 obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy receipts. Other sources of funding such as grants will be explored. A specific detailed funding strategy will be required for each category/project identified in the final IDP.

National reforms are proposed to the current development contributions regime, with the introduction of a new nationally set Infrastructure Levy on the horizon. Work will continue under the existing arrangements until such time as the new levy arrangements are in place.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

- 6.1 The local plan is being progressed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and related regulations.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

- 7.1 The local plan will play an essential role in defining and delivering the Council's response to the climate emergency. The IDP will support this, by identifying a range of schemes that support our approach to climate change and environmental issues, such as renewable energy, active travel and public transport improvements to minimise car use, delivering green infrastructure and biodiversity and protecting our communities from flood risk.

8. Risk Management

- 8.1 Failing to identify infrastructure schemes and progress the IDP could mean that development comes forward in a piece-meal way without contributing to the necessary infrastructure. Each scheme within the IDP itself will be risk assessed.

9. Equality Implications

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is prepared and updated as each stage of the local plan is produced.

10. Corporate Implications

- 10.1 The new local plan and associated IDP will support delivery of the Corporate Plan. There are significant implications for a wide range of Council services regarding the provision of infrastructure in a timely way.

11. Options Considered

- 11.1 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a requirement of national policy as part of the plan-making process.

Author:

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan March 2022

[Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan March 2022 \(North Somerset\)](#)

Report to Executive Committee 18 October 2023

[Committee Report NSC \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Local Plan Regulation 19 Draft – Executive Committee 18 October 2023

[09.1 Local Plan Reg 19 Executive Committee October 2023.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)