

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	29 September 2016
Subject:	Gloucester City Plan Programme		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Adam Gooch, Principal Planning Officer		
	Philip Bylo, Interim Planning Policy and Heritage Manager		
	Email: adam.gooch@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel: 396836	
	Email: philip.bylo@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel: 396854	
Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To respond to the Motion agreed at the Special meeting of Council on 30 June 2016 that Members should receive the programme for the progression of the Gloucester City Plan and its subsequent Submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is therefore asked to **RESOLVE** that the programme for the progression of the Gloucester City Plan and its subsequent Submission to the Planning Inspectorate be noted.

3.0 Local Plans for Gloucester

- 3.1 The emerging Local Plan for Gloucester consists of two inter-related documents. The first is the **Joint Core Strategy (JCS)**, which covers the Gloucester City, Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough, and sets out strategic level planning policy, such as defining the housing requirement, strategic site allocations and high level development management policies on areas such as affordable housing, landscape and retail. The JCS has now reached an advanced stage in preparation, and is currently being considered at 'Examination in Public' (EiP) and will undergo a further public consultation on main modifications in November/December 2016. Following on from this, representations will be reviewed by officers and submitted to the Inspector. Further to this, depending on the nature of the submissions, it may be the case that the Inspector wishes to hold further hearing sessions before coming to final conclusions. At the time of writing, it is anticipated the Inspector's final report will be received in spring 2017, followed by adoption by the three Councils shortly after.

3.2 The second document is the **Gloucester City Plan (GCP)**. This covers the administrative area of Gloucester only, and will provide locally specific site allocations and development management policies, set within the strategic context of the JCS. Officers are now in a position to progress the preparation of the City Plan due to the advanced stage that has been reached for the JCS as this sets the context within which the City Plan can be prepared.

4.0 City Plan Background and Member Involvement

4.1 To date there have been several consultations on the GCP, but the timetable has always been staggered behind the JCS given that the JCS is the higher level plan and the City Plan needs to be in general conformity with the JCS. The consultations held on the GCP to date have been:

- Scope of the Plan – looking at the key areas for the plan to address (October 2011)
- Part 1 – setting out the context and key principles (February 2012)
- Part 2 – a consultation on potential site allocation opportunities and a draft City Centre Strategy (May 2013)

4.2 The Planning Policy team recognises the importance of constructive and ongoing Member involvement in the evolution of the GCP. With regard to the Draft Plan, Officers prepared a range of 'Topic Papers' during late 2015, which were subject to an internal consultation with Officers and Members in January/February 2016 to help shape the draft City Plan.

4.3 Further to this, Officers are currently preparing arrangements for a number of workshops for Members during the middle of October 2016. This will be an opportunity for Members to engage with Officers on the proposed content of the draft GCP, ask questions and make comments before the documentation starts making its way through the committee cycle. To ensure the best use of time at the sessions, some information will be made available to Members in advance. In addition, Officers will of course continue to engage Members in the development of the GCP as it progresses through its statutory processes.

5.0 Next Stages of the Gloucester City Plan

5.1 The next stage will be a consultation on a 'Draft plan'. This will update and take forward the Scoping, Part 1 and Part 2 consultations and include for the first time a range of locally specific development management policies. The timetable allows for this to be considered and signed off by full Council in November for public consultation commencing in January 2017.

5.2 The next stages of the Gloucester City Plan are therefore programmed as follows:

- October 2016: Member sessions will be held where Members will have a further opportunity to find out what the City Plan will include and provide feedback to Officers.

- November 2016: The Draft City Plan will be considered by Planning Policy Sub-Committee on 17 November, then Full Council on 24 November where approval will be sought for the commencement of a public consultation exercise.
- December 2016: Officers to prepare for the public consultation.
- January 2017: Publish Draft GCP for the six-week public consultation period.
- March to June 2017: consideration of the public consultation responses and drafting of the Pre-submission GCP.
- Summer 2017: agreement by Council of the Pre-submission GCP for consultation purposes.
- Summer 2017 - Pre-Submission GCP consultation.
- Autumn 2017 - Submission to the Planning Inspectorate.
- The GCP EiP will then be programmed by the Planning Inspectorate. The specifics of this date are not yet available, but this could be expected to take place in late 2017.

5.3 Various parts of the background evidence base are also being progressed at the current time including employment, infrastructure, flooding, parking and transport modelling. The evidence base has in part been subject to suitable progress being made with the JCS evidence base updates, and reaching the JCS Modifications consultation stage to be able to provide a suitable level of policy context for the City Plan.

5.4 These evidence base projects will have to be completed for the City Plan prior to the commencement of the Pre-submission stage.

6.0 Key Stages of the Plan Preparation Process

6.1 As the 'strategic' plan, the JCS sets the context with in which the GCP will be prepared; the table below provides a summary of the key stages in the preparation of both plans.

	JCS	City Plan
September	19 - Submission of draft Proposed Modifications to Inspector.	
October	24 – Approval of Proposed Modifications by Council.	
November	w/c 7 (tbc) – Commencement of statutory public consultation on Proposed Modifications.	17 – Consideration of draft City Plan by Planning Policy Sub-Committee 24 – Approval of draft City Plan consultation by Council.
December	w/e 16 (tbc) – Close of public consultation on Proposed Modifications.	
January	Consideration of responses to Proposed Modifications.	w/c 2 (tbc) Commencement of public consultation on draft City Plan.
February	Further Examination sessions (tbc).	w/c 13 - Close of public consultation on draft City Plan.
April/May	Adoption of JCS (tbc).	

7.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

7.1 The City Plan is a document that can be used by all members of the Gloucester community on an as needed basis. Its policies will provide the context for the promotion of ABCD initiatives across the City.

8.0 Alternative Options Considered

8.1 None. The Council is required to prepare a statutory development plan. The progression of the GCP is consistent with national planning law and national planning policy.

9.0 Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 Officers are now in a position to focus on the Gloucester City Plan and can therefore set out a reasoned programme for Members.

10.0 Future Work and Conclusions

10.1 Following adoption of the JCS and City Plan, ongoing Local Plans work will involve the delivery of the JCS Strategic Allocations and development sites within the City. The new development management policies within the GCP will provide an up to date framework for the determination of planning applications. The effectiveness of these policies will also be monitored on an annual basis through the Council's annual monitoring work.

11.0 Financial Implications

- 11.1 The financial resources for the preparation of the GCP have been incorporated within the Council's Money Plan. Officer will work to ensure that the most cost-effective means are utilised in the preparation of the GCP and its evidence base.

Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

12.0 Legal Implications

- 12.1 The Council is required to have an up to date development plan, the lack of such a plan would mean that the Council's future planning decisions could be open to challenge by applicants and third parties if they are not based upon an up to date planning framework.

One Legal has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

13.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 13.1 The progressions and adoption of the GCP will provide a robust development plan that will be a major material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the City. The lack of a plan would mean that the Council would have to rely upon outdated development planning policies and the use of the NPPF and NPPG. The existence of up to date planning policies would better reflect local circumstances and also reduce the risk of adverse costs awards in planning appeals.

14.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 14.1 The City Plan will sit underneath the Joint Core Strategy and provide a range of locally specific development management policies and site allocations. At this point the recommendation to Council is to approve the proposed timescale to Submission and there are no equalities implications in this regard.
- 14.2 The plan making process is open to all parties during the formal consultation processes. Subject to approval, the Draft GCP will be considered for public consultation by Council in November 2016. All draft policies proposed through this Plan will have been subject to an 'Integrated Assessment'. This satisfies the City Council's statutory responsibilities with regard to Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Equalities Impact Assessment. It also incorporates a Health Impact Assessment which is not a statutory requirement but included as it is considered best practice.
- 14.3 Integrated Assessment is an iterative process and draft policies will have been assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure they are the most sustainable option, in the context of national requirements and local characteristics. This includes making sure that policies and proposals would not be affect a particular group differently in a positive or negative way. Further information will provided as a supporting document to the Draft GCP in November.

Background documents: None