

## **Report to CABINET**

# **Local Development Scheme 2025 Update**

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Elaine Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Decent Homes

**Officer Contact:** Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

### **Report Author:**

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**3 March 2025**

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### **Reason for Decision**

On 12 December 2024 the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to all local authority leaders and Metro Mayors across England to introduce the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposed planning reforms, and to request all councils to review and update their timetables for getting an up-to-date development plan in place within the next 12 weeks – so by 6 March 2025.

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), adopted 21 March 2024, forms part of Oldham's Development Plan. However, as a high-level strategic plan it does not cover everything that a Development Plan needs to address, and it was always intended for each borough to adopt their own "Part 2" Local Plan to sit alongside PfE.

As such, there remains a need to progress the Oldham Local Plan to provide locally-specific and up-to-date policies, particularly in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and achieving the right housing mix to meet our needs and address the housing crisis across the borough.

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is effectively a project plan and timetable for preparing development plan documents. Oldham's LDS was last updated on 22 December 2023 and the timetable for the Part 2 Local Plan has slipped since this time. As a result, the current LDS is not up-to-date and there is a need to prepare a new LDS that covers the Part 2 Local Plan in order to meet the requirements set out in the letter from

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MHCLG and ensure that we have an up-to-date local planning policy framework in place for the Borough.

On 12 February 2025, a Motion was agreed at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to write to the Deputy Prime Minister to ask her to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough. At the time of writing this report, the Deputy Prime Minister has not replied to that letter, and so PfE is still a part of the Development Plan for Oldham. Subject to the response received from the Deputy Prime Minister there are two options regarding how to progress the Local Plan and LDS – these are set out in the report and in the recommendations as below.

## Recommendations

Due to the Governments deadline of 6 March 2025, this report has different recommendations for members to review and approve, subject to the decision of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to the revocation of PfE for Oldham borough:

1. Were the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is rejected, the Local Plan would continue to be progressed as a Part 2 Local Plan alongside PfE, in line with programme set out in the LDS 2025 Update and this report.
  - Cabinet Members are asked to approve the update and publication of the Council's Local Development Scheme 2025 Update; or
2. Were the request to revoke PfE as it relates to Oldham borough is accepted, PfE would no longer be part of the Development Plan for Oldham and a new LDS would need to be prepared setting out a programme for preparing a brand new single Local Plan document for Oldham, and the deadline set by the Deputy Prime Minister for publishing a new LDS will not be met. Officers would prepare a new LDS as soon as possible and bring it to the first scheduled Cabinet meeting of the new municipal year in June for consideration.
  - Cabinet Members are asked to note that the deadline for publishing a new Local Development Scheme by 6 March 2025 will not be met by Oldham Council, but that a revised LDS for the preparation of a brand new, single Local Plan for Oldham borough will be brought to Cabinet in June 2025 for consideration.

This report is time limited insofar that the government has requested that all local authorities must publish details of their Local Development Scheme, three days after this Cabinet meeting, on 6th March 2025. This deadline would be impossible for Oldham Borough Council to reach if this particular decision was subject to the normal call-in process, which would likely not expire until 11th March 2025, at the earliest. Therefore, the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Board (Place, Economic Growth and Environment), Councillor Junaid Hussain, has, under Rule 14 of the Council's Constitution exempted this decision from the call-in process.

Resolved:

That the actions of the Chair of the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, in exempting this decision from the call-in process, be noted.

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**Local Development Scheme 2025 Update****1 Background**

- 1.1 On 12 December 2024 the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to all local leaders and Metro Mayors across England to introduce the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and proposed planning reforms. As part of the transitional arrangements for moving towards universal coverage of local plans all councils were asked to review and update their timetables for getting an up-to-date plan in place within the next 12 weeks – so by 6 March 2025. It was also made clear that the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) are prepared to use their intervention powers if necessary to ensure updated timetables are prepared, suitably ambitious plans are progressed and sound plans are adopted.
- 1.2 The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE), adopted 21 March 2024, forms part of Oldham's Development Plan. The Plan sets out the spatial strategy for the PfE districts; identifies the amount of new development that will come forward across the 9 districts, in terms of housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and the main areas in which this will be focused; supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities; and protects the important environmental assets across the city region. However, as a high-level strategic plan it does not cover everything that a Development Plan needs to address. Indeed many policies state that further detail is to be provided in districts' local plans. This includes policy areas such as affordable housing; the type and size of new housing; sport and recreation – as it is felt that these matters are better addressed at a local level.
- 1.3 Member engagement carried out as part of the recent Council Motion on Places for Everyone has highlighted the need, and support for, locally-specific and up-to-date policies to be in place – with or without PfE – particularly in relation to the delivery of affordable housing and achieving the right housing mix to meet our needs and address the housing crisis across the borough. As such, in line with the recently updated NPPF, it is proposed to progress the Local Plan Review as a 'Part 2' Local Plan that will provide more detailed local policies to support the implementation of PfE in Oldham, whilst helping to deliver the borough's regeneration ambitions and priorities.
- 1.4 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is effectively a project plan and timetable for preparing development plan documents. Oldham's LDS was last updated 22 December 2023 and the timetable for the Part 2 Local Plan has slipped since this time. As such, there is a need to prepare an up-to-date LDS to meet the requirements set out in the letter from MHCLG and to ensure that we have an up-to-date local planning policy framework in place for the Borough.
- 1.5 The LDS links to all three Council's Corporate Plan priorities – Healthier Happier Lives, Great Place to Live and Green and Growing, in that it will ensure delivery of an up-to-date local planning policy framework that reflects our priorities and ambitions.
- 1.6 Other implications are limited:  
  
Community Cohesion Implications, including crime and disorder implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – not applicable.  
Risk Assessments – as shown in section 7 of the LDS the risks are limited and can be mitigated.

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Co-operative Implications, Human Resource Implications, IT implications, Property Implications, Procurement Implications and Health and Safety Implications – delivery of the Local Plan review in accordance with the LDS timetable may require the need to commission evidence however procurement implications will be limited.

## 2 **Current Position**

2.1 The LDS is a public statement setting out the council's project plan for preparing the Part 2 Local Plan and other development plan documents. This LDS shall have effect from 4 March 2025.

2.1 The purpose of the LDS is to:

- Set out what planning policy documents exist and what new documents will be prepared as part of, and in support of, the borough's Development Plan;
- Set out the timescales the public can expect for the preparation and review of these documents;
- Indicate when the local community can get involved and influence the plan-making process;
- Enable work programmes to be set for the preparation of Local Plan documents; and
- Show how the programme for production of documents will establish and reflect the council's priorities and to assist the programming of other council strategies and programmes.

2.2 The LDS must be made available to the public as it is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. Once completed local authorities are therefore required to publish the LDS on their website.

2.4 The main changes to this LDS and that published in December 2023 relate to the following:

- The profiles for the Local Plan review and Policies Map (previously referred to as the Proposals Map) have been amended to reflect changes to the timetable.
- Following adoption of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document on 21 March 2024 its profile has been removed.

### *Oldham Local Plan*

2.5 To date consultation for the Oldham Local Plan has been carried out on the:

- Regulation 18 Notification and Integrated Assessment Scoping Report - July to August 2017;
- Issues and Options – July to August 2021
- Draft Plan – January to February 2024

2.6 The remaining stages in the preparation of the Oldham Local Plan are set out in the profile at section 5 of the LDS and are as follows:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Publication Plan (Regulation 19)	January to February 2026
Submission	May 2026
Adoption	Spring 2027

2.7 The Policies Map (previously referred to as the Proposals Map) will be updated alongside the Oldham Local Plan to the same programme.

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### 3 Options/Alternatives

#### 3.1 Option 1 - To approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025 Update.

Advantages – updating the LDS will ensure that an up-to-date timetable for the Oldham Local Plan is available by 6 March 2024 as per the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister dated 12 December 2024.

Disadvantages – there are no disadvantages to updating the LDS.

#### 3.2 Option 2 – Not to approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025 Update.

Advantages – there are no advantages in not updating the LDS.

Disadvantages – failing to update and publish the LDS by 6 March 2024 would not meet the requirements set out in the letter from the Deputy Prime Minister dated 12 December 2024. As stated at paragraph 1.1 above it is clear that MHCLG are prepared to use their intervention powers if necessary to ensure updated timetables are prepared, suitably ambitious plans are progressed and sound plans are adopted.

### 4 Preferred Option

#### 4.1 To approve and publish the Local Development Scheme 2025 Update.

### 5 Consultation

#### 5.1 Not applicable for this document.

### 6 Financial Implications

#### 6.1 The total cost to deliver the Local Development Scheme is approximately £240k. (See Appendix 2) There is £203k in the Local Plan Reserve which will be used to help fund the scheme.

#### 6.2 The 2024/25 costs of £11,489 will be funded from existing Planning revenue budget in 2024/25 and will not require any drawdown from the reserve.

#### 6.3 This would leave outstanding project costs from 2025/26 onwards of £227,749. This will be funded from a full reserve drawdown of £203k with the remaining £24,749 needing to be funded from Planning Base Budget.

(Mohammed Hussain)

### 7 Legal Implications

#### 7.1 As part of its local development scheme the Council must specify the timetable for the preparation and revision of its development plan documents and in accordance with S15(8) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council must revise its local development scheme at such time as they consider appropriate or when directed to do so by the Secretary of State. As stated at paragraph 1.1, the Deputy Prime Minister has asked all Councils to urgently review and update their timetables for

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getting an up to date plan in place. The Council must make the up-to-date text of the LDS, a copy of any amendments made to the LDS, and up-to-date information showing the state of the Council's compliance (or non-compliance) with the timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents available to the public. Under the Council's Local Development Framework Scheme of Delegation, annual reviews of the LDS are the responsibility of the Portfolio Member.

(A Evans)

**8 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

8.1 Yes – see Appendix 3

**9 Key Decision**

9.1 Yes

**10 Key Decision Reference**

11.1 ESR-03-25

**12 Background Papers**

12.1 The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does not include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act :

- Letter from MHCLG on 'Building the homes we need', dated 12 December 2024
- National Planning Policy Framework, published December 2024

**13 Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – Local Development Scheme 2025 Update  
Appendix 2 – Local Plan review anticipated budget  
Appendix 3 – Oldham Impact Assessment Tool

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## **Appendix 1 – Local Development Scheme 2025 Update**

See separate document

## Appendix 2 – Local Plan review anticipated budget

Evidence						
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total	Comment
Evidence committed	£6,489	0	0	0	£6,489	
Evidence to be carried out	0	£30,000	0	0	£30,000	
<b>Evidence total</b>	<b>£6,489</b>	<b>£30,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>£36,489</b>	
Preparation costs	£5,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£41,000	This encompasses contribution towards Engagement HQ of £5,000 per annum (if required), IT and design support, and costs association with consultation.
Examination costs	£0	£0	£70,000	£70,000	£140,000	This encompasses the cost of the programme officer and Planning Inspectorate fees.
<b>Preparation total</b>	<b>£5,000</b>	<b>£12,000</b>	<b>£82,000</b>	<b>£82,000</b>	<b>£181,000</b>	
<b>Overall total (evidence and preparation costs)</b>	<b>£11,489</b>	<b>£42,000</b>	<b>£82,000</b>	<b>£82,000</b>	<b>£217,489</b>	
Contingency (10%)					<b>£21,523</b>	
<b>Overall total plus contingency</b>					<b>£239,238</b>	<b>Round up to an ask for £240,000</b>



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## **Appendix 3 – Oldham Impact Assessment Tool**

See separate document