



REPORT TO THE MEETING OF CABINET – 20 November 2024

PORTFOLIO: STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEPUTY LEADER – CLLR WARREN GIBSON

REPORT FROM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CLIMATE AND GROWTH

SUBJECT: CASTLE POINT PLAN BOARD UPDATE

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to Cabinet on the work of the Castle Point Plan Board and the progress being made on the Castle Point Plan.

2 LINKS TO COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Work on the Castle Point Plan has implication for all of the Council's priorities.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet **RESOLVES**

(1) To note the progress that is being made on the Castle Point Plan, as detailed in this report.

4 CASTLE POINT PLAN PROGRESS

- 4.1 As part of the Council's agreement to commence work on the Castle Point Plan in [November 2022 \(Agenda Item 11\)](#), it was agreed to establish the Castle Point Plan Board (the "Board") to oversee the work on the Castle Point Plan. The Board is a cross-party board made of representatives from both parties of the Council.

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- 4.2 Since November 2022, the Board has met 37 times and has discussed a range of matters from the types of questions to be posed through engagement activities, the specifications for evidence base work, the outcomes of evidence base work and the content and wording of policies. Further meetings are scheduled for the remainder of the year and into early 2025.
- 4.3 The Board was heavily involved in reviewing and finalising the Issues and Options consultation document that was published for engagement in July 2024.
- 4.4 Where meetings have sought direction from the Board notes have been taken and are available to view on the Council's website: [Castle Point Plan Progress Reports](#). Not all meetings are noted, as some have simply been briefings on specific topics.
- 4.5 In July 2024, the outcomes of the Board's work from December 2022 to June 2024 culminated in the approval of the Issues and Options consultation document for engagement in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations.
- 4.6 Since that time the Board has been working on policy direction and reasonable policy alternatives for the thematic components of the Castle Point Plan, including the approach to be taken to economic development, to town centres and retail, to the overarching strategic policies and to housing policies, but not housing allocations. The initial outcomes of the Issues and Options consultation have been fed into these discussions as they have been processed.
- 4.7 Having had these discussions, officers are in the position to start drafting some of these initial sections of the Castle Point Plan for consideration by the Board. Further meetings to discuss other sections are planned.
- 4.8 Officers are also reaching the stage where the outcomes of the consultation have been analysed, providing a clear picture of what local people and other stakeholders such as the Environment Agency, Historic England, Essex County Council and our neighbours have said. This will enable the board over the Autumn period to begin to look at the site allocations to include in and exclude from the Castle Point Plan.
- 4.9 Working with officers, the Board remains on track to having a draft of the Castle Point Plan ready by the end of 2024 and is working to ensure that decisions are taking in good time to ensure that associated work essential to the successful progress of the plan, such as the Sustainability Appraisal, Transport Assessment and Infrastructure Delivery Plan can also be completed.
- 4.10 It remains the intention of the Board to provide a report to Council early in 2025 seeking approval for the publication and submission of a draft Castle Point Plan pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has previously been put under threat of intervention by the Secretary of State in relation to plan making and continues to be monitored in relation to progress with the Castle Point Plan. The ongoing work of the Board is critical to ensuring that the work on the Castle Point Plan is delivered in accordance with the agreed timetable and is making a significant contribution to managing the risk of intervention.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Castle Point Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment. It will also be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment. These reports will be considered by the Board at an appropriate time and will help to inform the decisions taken as the plan is developed.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The Castle Point Plan continues to be delivered from within the allocated budget.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken as no decision is being taken.



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Background Papers:-

None.

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