

**South Cambridgeshire District Council
Record of Executive Decision**

This form should be used to record key and other decisions made by individual Lead Cabinet members. The contact officer will ensure that the signed and completed form is given to Democratic Services as soon as reasonably practicable after the decision has been taken.

A key decision shall not be taken unless notice of the item has been published at least 28 days before the decision is to be taken except where:

- a General Exception notice has been published under Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules and the Chairman of Scrutiny and Overview Committee has been informed in writing; or
- a Special Urgency notice has been published under Rule 16 of those Rules and the Chairman of Scrutiny and Overview Committee has agreed the decision is urgent.

Unless permission has been obtained from the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee that this decision may be treated as a matter of urgency under Rule 12.19 of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules, this decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless called in under Rule 7 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules or Rule 12 of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules. Where consent has been obtained to exempt the decision from call-in, this will be specified below.

Lead Cabinet Member	Lead Cabinet member for Planning
Subject Matter	Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan - response to consultation on the submission plan
Ward(s) Affected	Whittlesford
Date Taken	Thursday, 19 September 2024
Contact Officer	Charlotte Morgan-Shelbourne, Planning Administrator (Charlotte.Morgan-Shelbourne@greatercambridgeplanning.org>)
Date Published	Thursday, 19 September 2024
Call-In Expiry/Exempt from call-in	Thursday, 26 September 2024
Key Decision?	No
In Forward Plan?	No
Urgent?	No

Purpose / Background
<p>Purpose</p> <p>1. The purpose of this report is to agree the Council's response to the public consultation on the submission version of the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation closes on 30 September 2024 at 5pm.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>2. The Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Area was designated on 25 August 2017. The neighbourhood area is for the whole parish of Thriplow and Heathfield.</p> <p>3. Officers have met with the Parish Council ahead of the submission consultation process and recognise the hard work that has been put into preparing the plan. The Parish Council has</p>

worked hard to engage with the local community and has ensured that they have had an opportunity to input into the final plan.

4. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening was undertaken on a draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan, and a screening determination was published in June 2022.
5. Pre-submission public consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken by the Parish Council from 30 January 2023 to 14 March 2023. Officers provided a formal response to the consultation, providing constructive comments about the plan to assist the Parish Council with finalising the Neighbourhood Plan. Officers have met with the Parish Council to discuss these comments and are aware that the submission version of the plan has taken on board many of the suggested changes.
6. On 3 June 2024, Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to South Cambridgeshire District Council. Officers have confirmed, as set out in the Legal Compliance Check for the Neighbourhood Plan, that the submitted version of the Neighbourhood Plan and its accompanying supporting documents comply with all the relevant statutory requirements at this stage of plan making. The Neighbourhood Plan and its accompanying supporting documents are published on our [website](#).
7. We therefore were able to carry out a consultation on the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan from 5 August until 30 September 2024.
8. Officers, in conjunction with Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council, are in the process of appointing an independent examiner to consider this Neighbourhood Plan. All comments submitted during the public consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan will be provided to the examiner for their consideration.

Considerations

9. The Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council to provide planning policies for development in the area, with the aim of providing greater clarity when determining planning applications in the area. The Neighbourhood Plan includes 15 planning policies (although we recommend in our submission plan response that 1 is removed and included as a community aspiration); the policies cover a range of issues including:
 - (i) Residential development
 - (ii) Employment (supporting the rural economy)
 - (iii) Local Green Spaces
 - (iv) Village Character
 - (v) Climate change
 - (vi) Biodiversity
 - (vii) Rural exception sites
 - (viii) Road safety and parking
 - (ix) Travel Networks and connections
10. To successfully proceed through its examination to a referendum, a Neighbourhood Plan must meet a number of tests known as the 'Basic Conditions'. These tests are different to the tests of soundness that a Local Plan must meet. The [Basic Conditions](#) are set out in national planning guidance and are summarised as follows:

- a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - b) the making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 - c) the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.
 - d) the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
 - e) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan, including that the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European wildlife site or a European offshore marine site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
 - f) the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
11. Our Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit includes Guidance Note 11 ([What are the Basic Conditions and How to Meet Them](#)), which sets out further details on each of the Basic Conditions. When a Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the local planning authority it must be accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement that sets out how the Parish Council considers that their Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions.
12. When considering a Neighbourhood Plan, the examiner will assess whether or not the Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions. When an examiner recommends that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum (if it meets the Basic Conditions, with or without modifications), the examiner's report must also set out whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood area. Comments made during the current consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which will be provided to the examiner for their consideration, should therefore address whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and can also address whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood area.
13. South Cambridgeshire District Council is fully supportive of parish councils bringing forward neighbourhood plans for their areas, including Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council's decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, and officers have been supporting the Parish Council in the plan's preparation. The Council's proposed response to this public consultation on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan is set out in Appendix A.
14. South Cambridgeshire District Council is supportive of the aims of the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan and our comments are intended to help the plan to be successful at examination as well as delivering policies that are clear in their meaning and are unambiguous in their interpretation. South Cambridgeshire District Council recognise the achievement of Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council in reaching this stage of submitting their plan to us for examination.

If the examiner is minded to recommend that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum, the Council does not feel that the referendum area needs to be extended beyond the designated Neighbourhood Area as the planning policies included in the plan would not have a substantial, direct or demonstrable impact beyond the Neighbourhood Area.

Declaration(s) of Interest

Record below any relevant interest declared by any executive Member consulted or by an officer present in relation to the decision.

None.

Dispensation(s)
In respect of any conflict(s) of interest declared above, record below any dispensation(s) granted by the Council's Standards Committee.

None.

Consultation
Record below all parties consulted in relation to the decision.

The opportunity has been provided for specialist officers from across the Council, including Development Management, Housing, the Built and Natural Environment, Economic Development, S106, Accessibility and the Planning Policy teams, to comment on the submission version of the neighbourhood plan.

Other Options Considered and Reasons for Rejection

An alternative option would be for the Council not to respond to the submission consultation, but the Council has a duty to support parish councils in their plan-making. If no response was made the parish council and the independent examiner would not have been made aware of the Council's views.

Final decision	Reason(s)
That the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning agrees the response to the submission consultation on the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan as set out in Appendix A.	The Council has a duty to support parish councils in preparing neighbourhood plans and is keen to support these local communities so that their plan is successful at examination. The response will provide the independent examiner with the Council's comments on the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Signed	Name (CAPITALS)	Signature	Date
Lead Cabinet Member	Signed copy available upon request from Democratic Services (democratic.services@scamb.gov.uk)		
Chief Officer			

Further Information

Appendices

Appendix A: The response by South Cambridgeshire District Council to the submission consultation on the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Background Papers

Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan - submission version of the plan and supporting documents:

<https://www.scamb.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/thriplow-and-heathfield-neighbourhood-plan/>