



# Key decision reached unanimously on the future of Hertsmere's draft Local Plan



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An important decision has been made unanimously to 'set aside' the current version of Hertsmere's new draft Local Plan but continue the plan-making process, so that future development in the borough remains under local democratic control.

All 39 councillors were asked to vote on the future of our draft plan at a meeting last night (Wednesday 27 April). Three potential 'next step' options were considered by the Executive Committee earlier in the evening. They were to continue to work on the current version of the plan; to set aside the current version of the draft plan, but continue the plan-making process; and lastly, to cease all work on the new plan and rely on the existing adopted Local Plan, which will become increasingly out-of-date. Councillors voted to proceed with the second option, which had been recommended for implementation by the Executive.

Hertsmere's draft plan was published last year and set out how the borough could grow over the next 15 years and beyond, by providing homes for the next generation as well as the infrastructure and jobs needed to support this growth. Nearly 18,000 responses were received on the draft plan during a public engagement last autumn – which is the highest response rate for any engagement, planning or non-planning, ever undertaken by the council.

Cllr Morris Bright MBE, Leader of the council and Portfolio Holder for Communications and Consultation said: "Last year's public engagement on our draft plan was one of the most successful engagements we've ever undertaken.

"We're grateful to all those who made submissions. Those submissions have given us and will continue to give us a valuable insight into the views and opinions of residents, businesses and other stakeholders about how the borough might develop in the future.

"It is clear from an initial analysis that a key theme was an objection to the level of development proposed in the draft plan, in particular that related to housing, and the impact on the Green Belt from that proposed growth.

"We have now prepared a report on the future of the draft plan which set out three potential next step options. Councillors were asked to consider these options and decide on the best way forward."

Cllr Dr Harvey Cohen, Portfolio Holder for Planning said: "We asked councillors to make a decision on the future of the draft plan, in light of the wide range of issues which were raised during the last public engagement.

"They had to take account of several issues, including the interim findings from the engagement on the draft plan, while balancing the statutory obligation we have as a Local Planning Authority to proactively prepare for growth in Hertsmere, in a way which enables local people to have as much control over the future of their borough as possible.

"Whilst we have responded to local concerns in setting aside the current version of the plan, it's also clear that if we don't have an up-to-date plan, there will be a risk of speculative applications for development coming forward, which might not benefit our local community or consider local infrastructure.

"By opting for this next step, we are resolving to put aside the current version of our plan, but continue the plan-making process, while taking into account any planning reforms announced by the government.

“It shows we are committed to doing all we can to positively shape growth in the borough and ensure local people can have a say on where they want development to happen, and how much.”

Additional funding was also agreed at the meeting in order to support the ongoing work on the engagement responses and further technical work.

The full report on the draft plan is available to view [here](#). It also includes an interim review of the public engagement undertaken on the draft plan.

To view the webcast of the meeting go [here](#).

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