

**REPORT TO THE LOCAL PLAN EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL MEETING OF
19th September 2016**

Meeting: Local Plan Executive Advisory Panel
Date: 19th September 2016
Subject: Assessment of Selected Spatial Options
Report of: Local Plan Project Manager
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Jo Brodrick
Status: For recommendation to Executive
Relevant Ward(s): All

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek the Panel's recommendations to the Executive on the preferred strategic option for housing and employment development for inclusion in the pre-submission Draft Local Plan.

2. Recommendation:

2.1 That the Executive be recommended to agree that:

(a) Option 6, involving a Strategic Development Area on land east of Lutterworth, should be the preferred option for meeting Harborough District's housing and employment needs over the plan period to 2031 and beyond.

(b) Scraftoft North SDA should be allocated as a reserve site for 1200 dwellings, only to be released if needed to contribute to meeting housing need from other local authorities as agreed within a Memorandum of Understanding or equivalent.

3. Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 The pre-submission draft Local Plan must be based on a robust analysis of the reasonable alternatives in order to meet the tests of soundness at Examination and should present a strategy which meets housing requirements for the district as well as making a contribution to meeting any unmet needs arising from outside in accordance with the statutory Duty to Cooperate.

- 3.2 The report sets out this analysis based on a wide range of proportionate evidence, which has been considered in detail by the members of the Local Plan Executive Advisory Panel. Any changes to this report as a result of Members' consideration of evidence items at their informal briefings on 12th and 19th September will be reported orally. In particular, the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will have been considered by Members at an informal Panel briefing (to which all Members are invited) on 19th September and is included earlier on the agenda for this meeting. Any changes to the SA and any changes to this report as a result of this will be reported orally.

4. Key Facts

Background

- 4.1 The Executive at its meeting on 9th May 2016 agreed to further assessment of the following Selected Options (from the original 9 options considered) for accommodating future development needs in the Harborough District in the plan period to 2031:
- Option 2: Core Strategy Distribution;
 - Option 5: Kibworth SDA (North East proposal only);
 - Option 6: Lutterworth SDA; and
 - a variation of Option 4: Scraftoft / Thurnby, but based on a minimum of 1,200 dwellings in the vicinity of Scraftoft North.
- 4.2 It also agreed by the Executive that these Selected Options be subject to further tests of:
- land availability,
 - infrastructure requirements,
 - transport impact,
 - flood risk,
 - viability,
 - landscape impact,
 - environmental sensitivity / mitigation, and
 - sustainability.
- 4.3 It was also agreed that there would then be a further report to Executive with a recommendation for a single preferred option for distributing housing and general employment development through the Local Plan across the District during the plan period. It was further agreed that this can be one of the options, a combination of options, or some other hybrid solution based on them.
- 4.4 At its meeting on 18th July the Local Plan Executive Advisory Panel (LPEAP) considered a methodology for assessing the four Selected Options based on the various evidence studies that are being undertaken. This report presents the findings of the assessment and recommends a way forward.

Evidence

4.5 The new evidence being used to inform the assessment and the progress made on them is set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Evidence in Support of Assessment of Selected Options

Item	Consultant	Progress
2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	In-house	Complete
Strategic Development Areas (SDA) Deliverability Surgeries	Peter Brett Associates	Complete
Scraptoft North Landscape Capacity Study	The Landscape Partnership	Complete
SDA Comparative Landscape Assessment	The Landscape Partnership	Complete
Housing Trajectories and Potential Site Allocations	In-house	Complete
Traffic impact – preliminary assessment of options	Jacobs	Report and further work on Magna Park impacts to follow.
Sustainability Appraisal of Selected Options	Aecom	Draft report received – to be reviewed
SE Leicester Transport Study	Edwards and Edwards	Technical Notes issued; workshop held on 1 st September
Windfall and commitments discount analyses	In-house	Complete
Viability Assessment: SDA update and comparison.	Aspinall Verdi	Revised infrastructure costs provided and housing market assumptions updated- initial output received 30 th August.
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	GL Hearn	Near completion; report to Executive 10th October.
Study on housing impacts of additional strategic distribution development	GL Hearn	To follow on from completion of HEDNA, but no specific date yet.
Further transport assessment on impact of signalling adjustments at key junctions / Gilmorton Road restrictions and off-peak HGV movements in Lutterworth.	Jacobs	Being commissioned.

4.6 The results of these studies have been fed into the matrix for assessment of the Selected Options as agreed by the LPEAP on 18th July. The resulting analysis is set out in Appendix A. Some changes have been made from the methodology set out in the LPEAP report, in summary these are:

- The use of Local Plan Objectives as a factor has been dropped. This is because they repeated factors included elsewhere and because there was little to distinguish between the options on the basis of these Objectives. They were considered as part of the previous assessment of 9

options and all selected options meet them, so they do not add anything further to the assessment.

- Certain other categories have been amended, separated out or combined, for instance infrastructure constraints and costs have been separated as have the landscape capacity assessment and the SA assessment of built heritage and landscape. Any element of double counting as a result is minimised because the 'score' for each category is only an average of its elements.
- The Red, Amber Green (RAG) scoring has been done independently from the numerical ranking of the sites, rather than being based on it. This was because basing a RAG classification on the relative merits for each factor would have given a misleading impression that the option scoring worst was red and therefore a potential 'show stopper', whereas in fact this may not be the case, i.e. it could just be slightly worse than the other options. In addition an extra category has been introduced to enable a better distinction between options under some factors. However this has not affected the ranking, which has been done on a numerical basis and then averaged for each category of factor (i.e. transport, deliverability, environmental, socio-economic and planning principles). These averages were then added together to give a summary score which weights each category equally.

4.7 The colours used in Appendix A indicate as follows:

- Red- a major adverse impact or constraint,
- Amber – a moderate adverse impact or constraint,
- Yellow – a minor adverse impact or constraint,
- White - no information or not possible to compare the option(s) on this factor,
- Light green – a minor positive effect in relation to this factor, and
- Dark green – a major positive effect in relation to this factor.

4.8 The summary of the scores is set out in the Table 2 below. The scores derive from a ranking of which Option performs best (1) to which performs worst (4), but with some scoring equally (in which case the 'ranking points' are shared equally), so **the best scoring options are those that score lowest**. The total sums these 5 averages so the possible total scores range from 5 (best) to 20 (worst).

4.9 The scorings in the table below have been used to inform the paragraphs (4.10 – 4.36) following the table which summarise the findings for each Option. More detailed analytical background can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2: Summary of Ranking Scores

	Option 2: Core Strategy	Option 4 (variation): Scraftoft N	Option 5: Kibworth North & East	Option 6: East of Lutterworth
<i>Category of factors</i>	<i>Average ranking</i>	<i>Average ranking</i>	<i>Average ranking</i>	<i>Average ranking</i>
<i>Transport</i>	2.50	2.83	2.50	2.17

<i>Deliverability</i>	2.64	2.43	2.43	2.50
<i>Environmental</i>	3.70	1.80	2.20	2.30
<i>Socio-Economic</i>	2.89	2.61	2.48	2.02
<i>Planning Principles</i>	2.86	2.00	2.79	2.36
Total	14.59	11.74	12.36	11.31

Option 2: Core Strategy

- 4.10 This option performs equal best (with Option 4) in terms of **transport** impacts within Harborough, although there is a need for junction improvements as set out in the Jacobs report and Market Harborough Transport Study. It will have impacts in Northamptonshire and the effects on local junctions around Fleckney, as well as the limited access from there to employment, are likely to be greater issues than in the other options. This option does not offer opportunities for securing wider transport benefits for the community because of its dispersed nature.
- 4.11 In terms of **deliverability** Option 2 is marginally better than the others. However, there would be problems of finding land for over 200 dwellings in Lutterworth without going into the Area of Separation between it and Magna Park, unless a site north of the town (not currently in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Study (SHLAA)) comes forward. Should this Option be pursued, there would need to be development in Scraftoft and Thurnby as a major extension to that already committed in this area. A large number of sites in Market Harborough would also need to be allocated. The villages of Church and East Langton, Dunton Bassett, South Kilworth, and Tugby have a shortfall of SHLAA sites totaling 132 dwellings.
- 4.12 Based on earlier viability work, this Option is viable, although this work is being updated in consultation with property professionals for inclusion in the whole-plan viability report. These currently show possible viability challenges in Fleckney, but these are common to all options. All options show some (surmountable) issues in relation to primary school provision, but these are slightly greater in Option 2. Infrastructure costs are not a major problem and ownership issues are unlikely to be a concern. However this option would offer very little longer term growth potential and Market Harborough would require infrastructure investment in terms of a primary school and the measures recommended in the Market Harborough Transport Study.
- 4.13 This option is the worst performing in **environmental** terms. There are major negative affects indicated by the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in relation to impacts on the built and natural heritage and the natural environment, including effects on the character of rural settlements, biodiversity, agricultural land and air quality. There also concerns about the impact on flooding in Market Harborough and slightly lower concerns about landscape impact and about the distribution of more houses to the rural villages thus increasing carbon emissions, only partly off-set by concentration of development in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Scraftoft/Thurnby.

- 4.14 In terms of **socio-economic** matters, the option is worse than the others mainly because it does not offer employment development in association with housing sites over and above those also proposed on sites in all options. It also presents some challenges relating to primary school capacity in certain villages, but not significantly worse than in other options. While development will meet its own open space needs, it will only contribute to rectifying other shortages if CIL is introduced, thus avoiding the restriction on pooling of contributions. No additional gypsy and caravan site is proposed as a result of the option. While increasing car emissions in Market Harborough town centre, the increase is not as high as for Kibworth and Lutterworth in options 5 and 6.
- 4.15 In relation to NPPF **planning principles**, the option is marginally worse than the other options because it does not present the opportunity to create new places on a community scale, because of the lack of mixed use development and because of the issues of flood risk in Market Harborough.

Option 4: Scraptoft North

- 4.16 This option is equal best (with Option 2) in relation to **transport** impacts within Harborough District, but worst in relation to transport impacts in south east Leicester. This Strategic Development Area (SDA) would have only minor traffic impacts with its effects being relatively local and self-contained. Impacts on junctions in Leicester City are relatively minor compared with the effects of traffic increases from other sources, for instance at three junctions on the A6030, but there would be conflicts with potential development in the north of Oadby. The SDA offers more opportunity than others for a shift to sustainable modes of travel, due to its proximity to the Leicester urban area with its availability of frequent bus routes. It also offers some circulation improvements in Scraptoft village and improved residential parking in Leicester, but these benefits are not as great as could potentially be achieved by the Kibworth and Lutterworth SDAs.
- 4.17 The option is on a par with Option 5 (Kibworth) and marginally better than Option 6 (Lutterworth) in terms of **deliverability**; it is also better than Option 2. It does not perform as well as the other two SDA options in relation to housing land shortfalls, with the housing trajectory showing a shortfall of about 200 dwellings during the plan period, this being shared between Lutterworth and the same villages as referred to under Option 2.
- 4.18 Option 4 performs best in relation to infrastructure constraints which are fewer than in the other options, with the need for a new primary school but potential savings in secondary school costs if use is made of adjacent Hamilton College rather than the catchment area schools in Oadby. In terms of costs per dwelling it is significantly better in total and slightly better per dwelling than the other SDAs, although Option 2 is likely to have less cost. Its ownership issues are easier to solve since the site for the replacement golf course is owned by the promoter. As a result it is projected to start a year earlier than the other two SDAs.
- 4.19 The SDA is viable against Residual Land Value (RLV), although the RLV is only about half of that for Lutterworth and Kibworth SDAs and it is not viable

against Threshold Land Value (TLV) because of the lower market values in this locality. However the TLV may be of less importance because of the public ownership of much of the land and the benefits 'in kind' being gained by the golf club by way of a replacement site. The Scraftoft North SDA offers the possibility of extension to the east in the next plan period (but this has not been allowed for in the viability assessment).

- 4.20 The option performs best in **environmental** terms because it does not contain features of nature conservation interest (despite being partly designated as a Local Nature Reserve, the Extended Phase 1 habitats Survey reveals little of value) and it has medium / high landscape capacity (on the assumption that the Green Wedge is to be lost as a result of the policy change in the Local Plan). It has low flood risk but measures will be needed to ensure that flood risk downstream in Leicester City is avoided. The SA does show moderate negative effects on built and natural heritage overall and in Scraftoft, on a par with Option 6, but slightly better than Option 5 and significantly better than Option 2. The SA also shows a moderate negative impact on the natural environment, similar to Option 5 but better than Option 6 and substantially better than Option 2.
- 4.21 In **socio-economic** terms Option 4 is better than Option 2, but slightly worse than Option 5 (Kibworth) and significantly worse than Option 6 (Lutterworth). This is because it does not provide employment uses and does not have many existing local community facilities (although it can access facilities in Leicester City). It also performs less well than the other options in relation to the SA assessments of effects on housing and the economy (mainly because it serves Leicester rather than Harborough District residents, although it should be borne in mind that the demographic projections underlying the Objectively Assessed Need are for the Housing Market Area and so do not just relate to Harborough residents and take account of migration between local authorities) and on health and well-being (because it has only potential improvements to community infrastructure and open space). It does not perform well in relation to green infrastructure provision, with an under-provision of some 2 hectares. No gypsy and traveller site is proposed as part of the SDA. It has the lowest level of traffic emissions due to lower journey times.
- 4.22 The option performs best in relation to NPPF **planning principles**, scoring consistently well against most of them, apart from 'promoting mixed use developments' and to a lesser extent 'allocating land of lesser environmental value' as a result of its Green Wedge status. There are relatively limited opportunities for wind power due to its location in the constrained Higher Leicestershire landscape character area.

Option 5: Kibworth North and East

- 4.23 In terms of **transport** impacts, this option has some link capacity issues on the A6 north and south but results in a reduction in congestion in Kibworth. It has the highest journey travel times due to the distance to employment and so performs worse than Options 2 and 4 in respect of effects within Harborough. It has impacts on the A6 in south east Leicester as well as on some rural

roads to the west, but the effects within Leicester and Oadby are less than for Option 4. The disadvantage of a poor relationship to employment opportunities and higher out-commuting is weighed against the benefit of securing a by-pass for the village, enabling the down grading of the A6 through the settlement and the introduction of improved pedestrian and cycle links to facilities, with longer term potential for a railway station post implementation of HS2.

- 4.24 This option is on a par with Option 4 in performing marginally best in relation to **deliverability**. Should this Option be pursued there would be a small shortfall of sites in Lutterworth and in the same 4 villages as in the other options, albeit that the latter is lower than in the other options.
- 4.25 There is a possible need to upgrade the sewage works at Kibworth and a need to extend the secondary school, so that, together with to cost of the by-pass, infrastructure costs are higher than in Options 2 and 4, but less than for Option 6. The Kibworth SDA is viable against Residual Land Value (which is slightly higher than for Lutterworth), although only marginally viable against Threshold Land Value, which is assessed to be higher than in the other SDAs.
- 4.26 The main problem with this SDA relates to land ownership, although alternative methods to ensure comprehensive development and equalization of contributions are possible and could be investigated further. It offers only limited longer term growth potential.
- 4.27 In relation to **environmental** factors the option performs better than Option 2 but not as well as Option 4 and marginally worse than Option 6. It does well with regard to flooding but poorly with regard to landscape impacts (both as assessed by comparative landscape study and through the SA). Although the SA shows a major negative in respect of built and natural heritage in Kibworth, this is due to landscape impacts and so it has been ranked equal to the other SDAs to avoid double-counting the landscape impact. Although the SA identifies a moderate negative effect in relation to loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, this is not a major issue for the District given its relatively limited contribution to food production.
- 4.28 With regard to **socio-economic** factors, the option performs second only to Option 6 (Lutterworth), and slightly better than Option 4 (Scraptoft North). This is mainly because of the SA assessment of its major positive affects on housing and economy and health and well-being, as well as over-providing Green Infrastructure. It also offers the advantage of proposing a gypsy and traveller site and some employment development. However it scores relatively poorly in relation to access to existing employment, shopping, school capacity and the lack of a leisure centre. It also has the highest predicted increase in car emissions due to higher average journey times, although partly compensated for by the reduction of traffic flows through the village.
- 4.29 Kibworth scores worse than the other two SDA options in relation to **planning principles**, with particular problems relating to landscape impact, pollution as a result of car commuting, impact on built heritage and walking/cycling distances to existing and proposed services and facilities.

Option 6: East of Lutterworth

- 4.30 This option performs best in **transport** terms, but only because it has low impact on south-east Leicester and offers a by-pass, the positive effects of which are still to be established. It is worse than the other options in terms of effects within Harborough District. There are challenges at the junctions to the south and south-west of the site, but further transport modelling work is proposed to address this and also to look at the impact on heavy goods vehicles in the off-peak periods.
- 4.31 This option is marginally worse than the other SDA options in relation to **deliverability**. It would result in small shortfalls in the four villages referred to in other options. Although this shortfall is greater than in Option 5, this is compensated for by not having a shortfall in Lutterworth.
- 4.32 It has high infrastructure constraints and costs, in terms of highways and bridges, primary (but not secondary) education, community facilities, utilities and drainage. While not a cost, the high voltage transmission line across the site, together with the flood zones 2 and 3, the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the proximity to the M1 motorway are major constraints on the form and layout of the development.
- 4.33 There is a need to clarify the involvement of the owners of land required to access the motorway crossing at the northern end of the site. This option's SDA performs marginally better than Kibworth in the viability assessment, being viable against both Residual and Threshold Land Values. However the RLV per hectare is slightly lower than that for Kibworth. It can make a major contribution towards longer term housing provision after the end of the plan period and can provide flexibility to meet housing needs arising from additional strategic distribution development in the area.
- 4.34 This option scores slightly worse than Option 5 and considerably worse than Option 4 in relation to **environmental** factors, but significantly better than Option 2, despite having challenges, which are being addressed, in relation to flooding and containing a SSSI (which creates a major negative effect for the SA). This is because the SDA has medium, medium/high and high landscape capacity for development and offers potential for sustainable growth, leading to a minor positive effect in relation to the SA assessment of resource use.
- 4.35 In **socio-economic** terms this option ranks far better than all others, with major positive effects on housing and economy and health and well-being identified by the SA, substantial employment provision within Lutterworth and at Magna Park, proposals for further employment development in the SDA, and a good range of existing community facilities, which would be further enhanced by the SDA. In particular there is capacity at the secondary schools in Lutterworth. It has the potential to provide a gypsy and traveler site, although no offer has been made. The only down-side is the higher levels of emissions predicted by the traffic model but further work is being undertaken on this as described in Table 1 above.
- 4.36 In terms of **planning principles**, the option scores second only to Option 4, the main problems relating to the natural environment (Misterton Marshes

SSSI and loss of best agricultural land), flood risk and distances for walking and cycling to existing services and facilities. These matters are being addressed through partnership working with the promoters and, should this SDA go forward, will be covered by policy criteria and a master planning.

Meeting Harborough's Needs

- 4.37 A Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) is in preparation by consultants GL Hearn and will provide updated objectively assessed needs for housing and employment provision.
- 4.38 It is clear from the analysis of the SHLAA and the housing trajectory presented to the last meeting of the LPEAP that land could be found in all of the selected options to meet a plan requirement of at least 550 dwellings per annum (as previously adopted as an interim target for working purposes), but that Option 2 would involve some difficult and undesirable sites in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Scraftoft/Thurnby. Officers will report on the objectively assessed need and the implications for the Local Plan final housing requirement following full analysis of the HEDNA report
- 4.39 The analysis in Appendix A and as summarised in paragraphs 4.10 – 4.36 above indicates that Options 4 and 6 offer the best way forward, while Options 2 and 5 are significantly worse. Option 6 performs best, but is only slightly better than Option 4. However it would be less desirable in terms of meeting need and providing choice for a large proportion of new development in Harborough District to be located in the extreme north-west corner of the district and in the form of a type of suburb to Leicester City rather than supporting the district's second largest town. Moreover, the Lutterworth proposal is a mixed use development of a scale likely to come forward over in the longer term, beyond the plan period, which would be more sustainable as a form of development.
- 4.40 However, there are risks associated with the Lutterworth SDA. These are:
- *The scale of infrastructure investment required.* These are already based on the promoter's figures, but caution has also been expressed by the consultants advising the Council on the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) in terms of whether these are realistic. This relates especially to the cost of the motorway bridge, potentially complicated signal controlled junctions and the need to take utility connections across the motorway to the site.
 - *The Misterton Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).* Natural England originally objected to the SDA on the basis of its impact on the SSSI. They now state that there is no objection in principle but that a feasibility study is required to demonstrate how the SSSI can be protected and if possible enhanced. Natural England state that the site should not be allocated unless they are satisfied with the mitigation measures proposed by this study. The promoters state that the study will be completed and the scope needs to be agreed with Natural England before the end of September.

- *The traffic impacts on Lutterworth town centre.* The modelling undertaken by the consultants advising on this aspect of traffic and highways does not show any improvement in traffic flows through Lutterworth town centre in the morning or evening peak. Indeed the flows down Gilmorton Road increase. However, this is the result of congestion at the new junctions proposed at the site's southern entrance on the A4304 and at the Frank Whittle roundabout on the A4303. Moreover the option is being seriously considered of making Gilmorton Road a bus and cycle only link into Lutterworth. The consultants have been asked to look at these matters and at the inter- peak HGV traffic flows.
- *Assumptions on delivery.* The promoters are putting forward start dates, build-out rates, a density (38 dwellings per hectare, net) and therefore a total capacity (2,950) that are questioned by officers and our consultants as being too optimistic given the scale of infrastructure proposed, the strength of the local market and densities being achieved on such sites elsewhere. An adjustment is proposed to reduce the density to 35 dph and the capacity to 2,750. The viability assessment has been undertaken on this basis.
- *Landowner cooperation.* It is understood that the owners of the land to the north-west of the SDA do not wish to be part of the development, wishing to develop their land independently. However, they are believed to be willing to make land available for access across the M1.

4.41 If the Lutterworth East option is to be preferred, it will be necessary to work closely with the promoters to arrive at an agreed basis for the SDA, to be reflected in the site-specific policy, and to investigate the scope for public funding, if necessary, to secure the development of the site. This will be picked up in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) accompanying the Local Plan in partnership with the developer. Subject to this and to Natural England's approval of the feasibility study in relation to the SSSI, it is recommended that Option 6 be recommended to the Executive as the preferred option for meeting housing and employment needs over the plan period to 2031 and for some 5-10 years beyond (depending on build out rates).

Meeting Strategic/ Cross Boundary Needs

4.42 It is likely that some authorities in the Housing Market Area (HMA) will be unable to meet their housing need as identified in the forthcoming HEDNA. In such an event authorities across the Housing Market Area (HMA) will be expected to co-operate and make an appropriate contribution by way of accommodating additional development into their plans to meet any unmet need. The scale of any such scenario is not yet known so a flexible approach is required. Four such approaches have been identified:

- Add to the pre submission Plan requirement and allocate sites either in accordance with the Core Strategy approach or by identifying an additional SDA (or a combination of both).

- Make no provision in the published pre-submission Local Plan and make a further change in the New Year following representations having been made on the Plan.
- Make no provision in the published pre-submission Local Plan and no further changes in the New Year, but include a statement / policy that provision for other authorities' unmet needs would be met through an early review of the Local Plan to take account of the MoU and the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Allocate a Reserve Site/Sites in the Local Plan which is/are likely to be sufficient to meet Leicester's needs. This/ these could be changed to an allocation(s) once it is clear what the requirement is under Duty to Cooperate and the revised status of the site could be advised to the Inspector on submission with a request that he/she recommends allocation of such site/sites as a Main Modification(s).

4.43 Following consideration of the risks associated with each of these, the Reserve Site(s) approach is recommended. This would ensure that the draft plan is resilient, pending the further work that needs to be done to identify the extent of unmet need and the options for meeting it, which will need to follow an agreed methodology.

4.44 Pending further work on the justification for and scale of other authorities' unmet need, and on the extent to which Harborough District is to be asked to assist, it is therefore suggested that the Scraftoft North SDA be allocated as a reserve site, only to be released if required in order to meet other authorities' housing needs as identified through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or similar form of agreement.

5. Legal Issues

5.1 It is necessary to pursue an objective and robust approach to option assessment as set out in this report to ensure the Local Plan is capable of being found sound at Examination.

6. Resource Issues

6.1 The costs of the additional evidence required for further investigation of issues in relation to the East Lutterworth SDA can be met from within the revised budget approved by Executive on 5th September 2016. At this stage it is not anticipated that any further evidence is required for the Scraftoft North SDA.

7. Equality Analysis Implications/Outcomes

7.1 The Local Plan will support the sustainable provision of new homes and jobs and assist the Council in meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Housing Act 2004.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 A timely decision on a preferred option for housing and employment development will help avoid delay to the Local Plan preparation/adoption process with consequent beneficial effect on the following Corporate Risks:

8.2 CR 08 Risk of challengeable planning decisions being taken relating to planning applications for residential development / Risk of planning appeals being upheld relating to residential planning applications.

8.3 CR 10 Local Plan Risks: lack of a sound Local Plan may lead to sporadic development and the inability to defend appeals.

9. Consultation

9.1 Consultation has taken place with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio holder and with the Council's retained lead Counsel on the contents of this report.

10. Options

10.1 Not to assess the 4 Options

10.2 The 4 Options need to be narrowed down into a preferred option, which will form the basis of the spatial strategy underpinning the Local Plan. This selection process must stand up to scrutiny by the future Local Plan Planning Inspector, together with all stakeholders and participants in the preparation of the Local Plan including during forthcoming Examination process. As such, the process needs to be robust, evidence-based, and objective and lead to the most sustainable and appropriate spatial option for the District.

11. Background Papers

[A New Local Plan for Harborough: Options Consultation Paper- September 2015](#)

[Harborough Local Plan: Options Consultation Sustainability Appraisal: Interim Report – September 2015](#)

Evidence as listed in Table 1, where published.

Previous report(s): [Report to Executive 9th May 2016: Local Plan Options Assessment and Selection](#)

[Report to Executive 18th July 2016: Selected Options Assessment Methodology](#)

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: N
Ward Members Notified: N

Appendices:

A. Selected Options Assessment Matrix

APPENDIX A: Selected Options Assessment Matrix