

Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group	
Meeting Date	27 th May 2026
Report Title	Local Plan Review - Draft Strategic Policies and Draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Development Management Policy
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins – Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Joanne Johnson – Head of Place
Lead Officer	Natalie Earl – Planning Manager (Policy)
Classification	Open
Recommendations	That members provide comment on and note the draft strategic policies and the Houses in Multiple Occupation development management policy.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the draft Strategic Policies which will be consulted on as part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan. Members of the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group (PTPWG) requested that the draft strategic policies were brought to a meeting ahead of agreeing the Regulation 19 Local Plan for consultation to give an opportunity to provide early feedback. It also includes a draft Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Development Management (DM) policy.
- 1.2 The draft policies will be consulted on as part of the Regulation 19 version of the emerging Local Plan this summer after which it will be submitted for examination in public.

2 Background, Context and Proposals

- 2.1 Strategic planning policies in local plans are high-level, overarching policies that set out the scale, pattern, and quality of development across a local authority's area. They provide the high-level, long-term planning principles that guide development, setting out the key principles for growth, infrastructure and the protection of areas. They sit above the development management (DM) policies (which were consulted on in the recent [Regulation 18 Local Plan](#))
- 2.2 Strategic policies were included within the [Regulation 19 Local Plan](#) that was consulted on in Spring 2021 and these have been updated using feedback received from members at a workshop in Summer 2024, updates to national policy and guidance and new and emerging evidence base documents.

2.3 The strategic policy titles are:

- Policy ST1 Delivering Sustainable Development in Swale
- Policy ST2 Swale Settlement Strategy
- Policy ST3 Climate Change
- Policy ST4 Development Needs for the Borough
- Policy ST5 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
- Policy ST6 Delivering a wide Choice of High-quality Homes
- Policy ST7 Good Design and Placemaking
- Policy ST8 Health and Wellbeing
- Policy ST9 Planning for Infrastructure
- Policy ST10 Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel
- Policy ST11 Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Policy ST12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

2.4 The policies, in Appendix I, are a work in progress and will be further refined in light of comments received by PTPWG members and using feedback received as part of the recent Regulation 18 consultation where there were a number of comments on what should be included in strategic/overarching policies. Officers have focused on updating the policies themselves so there is still work to do around these, especially to the pre-ambles text.

2.5 Also included in this report (Appendix II) is a draft Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Development Management (DM) policy which members raised as an aspiration at Policy and Resources Committee on 14th March 2026. It would sit alongside the emerging HMO Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Article 4. The policy has been drafted using examples from other adopted Local Plans and to ensure compatibility with the Council's emerging HMO SPD and Article 4.

Next Steps

2.6 Officers will continue to work on the policies, incorporating feedback, and the finished drafts will be presented to members as part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan this Summer.

3 Recommendations

3.1 That members provide comment on and note the draft strategic policies and the houses in multiple occupation development management policy.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

4.1 An alternative option is for members not to provide comments at this stage and wait until the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan is brought to committee. This is not

recommended as comments now can be given adequate time to be researched and considered by officers ahead of drafting the Regulation 19 document.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The draft policies will be part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation where there will be an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide comments.
- 5.2 Earlier iterations of the strategic policies were consulted on as part of the Regulation 19 Local Plan in Spring 2021 and comments received to the consultation have been considered whilst redrafting the policies.
- 5.3 A workshop was held with PTPWG members in Summer 2024 for members to comment on the Strategic Policies that were included in the Regulation 19 Local Plan in April 2021.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Local Plan supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan, aligning with the following priorities: • Environment - To provide a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable and enjoyable environment, and to prepare our borough for the challenges ahead. • Community - To enable our residents to live, work and enjoy their leisure time safely in our borough and to support community resilience. • Economy – Working with our businesses and community organisations to work towards a sustainable economy which delivers for local people. • Health and Housing - To aspire to be a borough where everyone has access to a decent home and improved health and wellbeing. The Corporate Plan contains a specific objective to ‘progress a Local Plan with local needs and capacity at its heart.’
Financial, Resource and Property	The Local Plan work programme is fully funded across a combination of base budget, committed reserves and a contribution from the government’s Local Plans Delivery Fund.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Preparation of a Local Plan is carried out under a national legislative and regulatory framework.
Crime and Disorder	There are no direct crime and disorder impacts arising from this decision.

Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	As part of the Local Plan, there will be a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment at each key stage in decision making and these assess the environmental impact of the Local Plan as a whole.
Health and Wellbeing	There is a draft Health and Wellbeing strategic policy and it is considered a cross cutting theme which is reflected in all of the strategic policies.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	No implications identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No implications identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	No implications identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.
Local Government Reorganisation	The current Local Plan timetable expects the Local Plan to be submitted for its Examination in Public and to be adopted before local government reorganisation is expected to be complete.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Draft Strategic Policies
- Appendix II: Draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Development Management Policy

8 Background Papers

8.1 [Regulation 19 Local Plan 2021](#)