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Cabinet

Report Subject	**Authorisation to consult on the Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**
Meeting date	15th October 2014
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor David Smith – Planning and Environment
Corporate Lead	Bill Cotton, Executive Director - Environment and Economy
Service Director	Mike Holmes, Service Director - Planning, Transport & Regulation
Status	Public
Classification Key Decision Impacts on Key Policy Framework	For decision No No
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Executive summary	The Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide aims to celebrate and strengthen local distinctiveness and promote high quality and sustainable design. It supports the aims of the Town Centre Vision and Council priorities for Building a Better Bournemouth - An Improving Environment and A Thriving Economy. Improving the quality of the built environment simultaneously supports investment in the tourism industry. It has also been prepared to further explain and clarify existing adopted planning policy contained in the Local Plan – Core Strategy and Town Centre Area Action Plan. This report seeks Cabinet approval to undertake a period of public consultation.

Recommendations	**That Cabinet:** **1) Agrees to publish the Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide Draft Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.** **2) Delegates to the Service Director Planning, Transport and Regulation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment authority to make minor text changes to the document prior to publication.**
Reasons for the recommendations	The Development Design Guide will: 1 help to deliver the Council's priorities for an Improving Environment and Thriving Economy. 2 support the aims of the Town Centre Vision 3 improve design quality in the Town Centre 3 be used to provide design guidance and clarification to property owners, developers and decision makers. It will provide a basis for general guidance, pre-application advice, planning decisions and appeal statements.

Background detail

1 In support of the Town Centre Vision, Planning Policy was updated through the Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) (adopted in March 2013). A key objective of the AAP is to "Ensure new development is sustainable, well-designed and responds to the positive characteristics of the Town Centre."

2 The AAP contains a number of policies which seek to address this objective, examples include: D3 Character areas and D4 Design Quality. There are also a number of policies contained in the 'parent' planning policy document, the Core Strategy (adopted October 2012) which are relevant and these include CS6 Sustainable Communities and CS7 which promotes the role of the Town Centre.

3 The Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide aims to provide clarification and to further explain these existing adopted policies. It is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and therefore will be prepared in accordance with the relevant Planning Regulations and procedures. This includes a period of public consultation.

4 This report seeks approval to publish a draft version of the Development Design Guide for a period of 6 weeks. A further Cabinet report will highlight the responses received as a result of the consultation, suggest potential amendments and seek formal adoption.

5 Once adopted, the Development Design Guide will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

6 A copy of the Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide (consultation version), is available at: www.bournemouth.gov.uk/designguide

Consultation

7 The prime purpose of this report is to seek authority to undertake public consultation for a period of 6 weeks during October/December 2014 in respect of the draft Development Design Guide SPD. The public consultation will accord with Bournemouth Council's Statement of Community Involvement which sets out the Council's consultation process for planning documents.

8 Discussions and consultation took place with officers in departments across the Council. These included: Planning, Transport, Property, Tourism (Destination Development & Strategy - Seafront, Night Time Economy and Arts), Environmental Strategy & Sustainability. Local Ward Councillors and the Local Development Framework Steering Group have also considered the Development Design Guide (8th October). The views of the LDF Steering Group will be reported to Cabinet through its minutes. The Bournemouth Development Company was also approached and their views were sought.

9 Amendments were made to the Development Design Guide in response to the internal views where possible and where they were consistent with the rest of the document. Textual alterations were also made to clarify points and additional sections added, for example on sustainability and accommodating car parking.

10 The document and will be available to view on the Council's website, the Town Centre Central Library and at the Council's Customer Service Centre during the period of public consultation. Press releases alerting the local media to the consultation will also be prepared.

Options

Option 1

11 Not to undertake public consultation. This would mean that the Development Design Guide would not have full material weight in determining planning applications as it would not have been prepared in accordance with Planning Regulations and processes. This would hinder progress towards improving the quality of design in the Town Centre.

Option 2

12 To undertake public consultation in accordance with Planning Regulations to ensure that full weight can be given to the SPD in the planning decision making process.

Summary of financial / resource implications

13 The Development Design Guide would not have any financial/ resource implications other than staff time, which is already covered by existing budgets.

Summary of legal implications

14 There are no legal implications for carrying out this public consultation, other than to ensure that it complies with current Planning Regulations for preparing supplementary planning documents.

Summary of human resources implications

15 There are no human resource implications for carrying out this public consultation.

Summary of environmental impact

16 The Environment Impact Checklist has been completed. This identified that the Development Design Guide would have a positive impact on the environment and will help to deliver the Council's priority and objectives for Improving Our Environment. It advocates improvements to the streetscene – in particular to the buildings. It also promotes adaptability and resilience to climate change.

Summary of equalities and diversity impact

17 An Equality Impact Needs Assessment screening has been completed. The Development Design Guide promotes the design of memorable buildings in key locations, buildings with clear entrances as well as strong and active frontages. This will assist in making the Town Centre easier to navigate, making movement around the Town Centre more efficient and help people to feel more safe and secure. This benefits everyone, but would be particularly helpful for those with learning difficulties, the young, those in minority groups and those with a physical disability. The Guide does not involve a significant commitment of resources.

Summary of risk assessment

18 A risk assessment has been completed which highlights that developers could perceive the Development Design Guide as adding complexity and cost to the planning process. However, it is clearly intended to help provide clarity about what is suitable in the Town Centre, for example in terms of building form, scale, appearance and materials in different parts of the Town Centre. This clarity will speed up planning discussions on design issues. Additionally, good design is mostly about good thinking early on in the design process and not about adding cost for the developer.

Background papers

Bournemouth Town Centre Development Design Guide SPD (consultation version) www.bournemouth.gov.uk/designguide

Environment Impact Checklist
www.bournemouth.gov.uk/designguideEnvImpact

Equality Impact Needs Assessment
www.bournemouth.gov.uk/designguideEINA

Risk Assessment www.bournemouth.gov.uk/designguideRiskAssess