

STATEMENT BY COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL ON CONSULTATION (SCHEDULE 17)

Colchester City Council's Local Plan Committee has voted in favour of the Preferred Options draft Local Plan proceeding to public consultation, taking a significant step towards shaping the city's future growth.

The Preferred Options Plan outlines a draft vision for sustainable growth across Colchester, addressing future needs in housing, transport, green infrastructure, employment, and climate resilience. Key proposals include site allocations for new housing, and employment, protection of vital ecological areas, and infrastructure improvements to support well-connected, inclusive communities.

The decision, made at the committee meeting last night, does not represent final approval of the plan or its policies, but means a seven-week public consultation will begin later this month, giving residents across the city the opportunity to review the draft plan and share their views.

The seven-week consultation will provide an important opportunity for the public to comment on all aspects of the draft plan, including proposed site allocations for new housing and employment, protection of ecological areas, and infrastructure improvements. All representations received during the consultation will be carefully considered and may lead to significant changes to the wording of policies and, potentially, to the site allocations themselves – including the exclusion of some sites and the inclusion of new ones.

The committee's decision ensures that the Local Plan process can move forward and that the public will have a meaningful say in shaping the future of Colchester. The draft plan forms the basis for discussion and is not final; it will be reviewed and refined in light of the feedback received before any further decisions are made.

Cllr Tim Young, Chair of the Local Plan Committee, said: "This is an important milestone in ensuring Colchester remains a place where people want to live, work and thrive. The consultation will give residents a real say in how we grow, and I urge everyone to take part and help shape the future of our city."

The council is committed to making the consultation process open, transparent, and accessible. Feedback will directly inform the next version of the Local Plan, which will be revised before submission to the government for examination.

Full details of the consultation, including how to view and comment on the plan, will be published on the council's website in the coming weeks. For more information and updates, visit www.colchester.gov.uk/NewLocalPlan