What is the Report About? (Executive Summary)

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet’s agreement to the proposed Cumbria County Council response to the consultation on Barrow Borough Council Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan. When adopted, this Plan will identify key development sites in Barrow up to 2031.

2. The Local Plan must be alive to the challenges facing the local community and in this respect the plan demonstrates an understanding of key issues. The strategic concerns expressed by the Council in the response to the previous consultation on the Publication Draft Local Plan have been addressed by the Borough Council in the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan.

3. Nonetheless there remain some concerns about the wording of some of the policies and supporting text, these and proposed remedies are set out in the technical response contained in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Recommendation of the Corporate Director

4. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the consultation response attached at Appendices 1 and 2 for submission to Barrow Borough Council.

Background to the Proposals

5. The planning system in England is ‘plan led’, whereby there is a statutory duty for all Local Planning Authorities to prepare a Local Plan for their area. Barrow Borough Council is currently preparing a new Development Plan (called the Local Plan) that, when complete, will replace the saved policies in the Barrow Borough Local Plan 2001 (as amended) and the Housing Chapter Alteration 2006 (as amended). The new Local Plan will identify key development sites and the policies used to decide planning applications up to 2031. The new Local Plan will sit alongside the Barrow Port Area Action Plan adopted in July 2010.
6. National planning guidance includes a “Duty to Co-operate” requiring that the Borough Council works with the County Council during the development of the Local Plan. To help fulfil this duty, the Borough Council and the County Council agreed a Statement of Intent to work together in relation to the Local Plan and the development of the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

7. The County Council has previously responded to earlier stages in the development of the Local Plan:
   - Issues Consultation (November 2012) – informal officer comments;
   - Issues and Options Consultation (November 2014) – informal officer comments;
   - Preferred Options Consultation (October 2015) – Cabinet endorsed response; and
   - Publication Consultation (December 2016) – Cabinet endorsed response.

8. Following the current consultation the Borough Council will submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent Examination. The dates of the Examination are to be confirmed. The purpose of the Examination is to ascertain whether the Local Plan is legally compliant and ‘sound’, i.e. positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Subject to the successful completion of this process, the Borough Council would then be able to adopt the Local Plan.

9. The County Council’s observations on the Local Plan relate to how the policies and site allocations impact on its functions as a service provider and its land ownership. The County Council will work with the Borough Council to secure the infrastructure improvements identified as being necessary to mitigate the impacts (both individual and cumulative) arising from the development of sites allocated for housing and other uses.

10. In the past Barrow has been affected by the decline in its traditional manufacturing base and its relative remoteness from regional and national markets. Underpinned by the Furness Peninsula’s established expertise in advanced manufacturing, it is considered that over the next plan period Barrow will have an opportunity to challenge these negative trends and position itself as a driver of growth within the northern economy. Framed by this context, the Local Plan seeks to promote a deliverable strategy that responds to the economic potential of the Borough.

11. To support growth of the Barrow area, the Local Plan focuses new development on Barrow-in-Furness (including Walney). In particular, it gives weight to the Port of Barrow and the opportunity to deliver significant and lasting regeneration through the Waterfront Business Park and Marina Village housing development. The plan also proposes modest levels of growth at Dalton together with small-scale growth in Askam, Ireth, Newton, Lindal and within rural areas.
12. The detailed response to the Local Plan is provided at Appendix 1. The key issues identified in the response include:

- **Town Centre**: the Council will work with Barrow Borough Council to prepare a Barrow Central Area Master Plan.
- **Approach to Flood Risk**: amendments to the water management policy are proposed to ensure consistency with Planning Practice Guidance and the Water Framework Directive.
- **Housing**: the Council supports the increase in the annual housing target to 133 units per annum. This equates to an overall housing requirement over the Plan period of at least 2,261 net additional dwellings, of which 1,958 dwellings would be provided on allocated sites.
- **Historic Environment**: amendments to the Plan are proposed to provide consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- **Infrastructure Delivery Plan**: the Council is broadly supportive of the IDP that sets the framework for infrastructure improvements necessary to support the delivery the land allocations in the Local Plan.

13. The Public Health Locality Manager (Barrow) has worked collaboratively with Barrow Borough Council on the section of the Plan which relates to “Promoting Healthy Communities”. Health impacts and impacts on health have been taken into account in the development of relevant policies in the Local Plan.

**County Council Property Assets**

14. Within the response to the consultation, it is proposed to offer continued support for the allocation of land in the following locations that are in the control of Cumbria County Council:

- Land at Waterfront Business Park (site ref. EMR03) for employment uses (18.42 ha)
- Land at Furness Business Park, (site ref. EMR1) for employment uses (0.4ha),
- Land East of Park View School (site ref. REC18), for housing development (0.8 ha),
- Land at Thorncliffe South (site ref. REC19b) for housing development (1.77 ha).

15. Members feedback on the Local Plan is summarised at Appendix 3.
Options Considered and Risks Identified

Option (a)

16. The strategic response outlined in this Report, together with the technical response, are agreed and provided to Barrow Borough Council.

Option (b)

17. Cabinet adds further comments to the strategic response outlined in this Report before it is provided to Barrow Borough Council.

Option (c)

18. Do not respond. However this would undermine any opportunities to influence the drafting of the Local Plan and its evidence in line with the Duty to Cooperate.

19. Reasons for the recommendation/Key benefits

- It will help to ensure that the Council’s interests and priorities are reflected in the Local Plan;
- It will ensure the integration of local plan growth and infrastructure planning;
- It will ensure the deliverability of the Local Plan; and
- It will ensure Local Plan policy maximises economic growth opportunities.

Financial – What resources will be needed and how will it be funded?

20. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report. However the Local Plan identifies key development sites in Barrow, and there will be financial implications in relation to the transport and infrastructure needs arising from the developments identified. These are set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Transport Improvements Study.

Legal Aspects – What needs to be considered?

21. The Council is under a statutory duty to engage constructively with the local planning authority on strategic cross boundary matters in order to produce effective local planning policies. It is a function of Cabinet to agree responses to consultation papers when appropriate.

22. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in the report. The Borough Council may accept or reject the suggested amendments put forward by the County Council but if they are not accepted the County Council
will have the opportunity to make representations about the draft plan at any subsequent examination.

**Council Plan Priority – How do the proposals contribute to the delivery of the Council’s stated objectives?**

23. The relevant Council Plan priority is:
   *Infrastructure: To provide a safe and well managed highway network, secure infrastructure improvements and support local economic growth.*

24. Supporting the development of the Local Plan will contribute to delivery of the Council’s priority by directly ensuring new development can be accommodated within the highway network, infrastructure needed to support growth is identified and is deliverable and that Local Plan policy promotes economic growth.

**What is the Impact of the Decision on Health Inequalities and Equality and Diversity Issues?**

25. Local Plan preparation follows detailed procedures for public engagement that Barrow Borough Council must adhere to.

**Appendices and Background Documents**

Appendix 1 – Technical Response
Appendix 2 – Comments on Specific Development Sites
Appendix 3 – Local Member Comments

**Key Facts**

**Electoral Division(s): All in Barrow**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Decision Included in Forward Plan</th>
<th>Exempt from call-in</th>
<th>Exemption agreed by scrutiny chair</th>
<th>Considered by scrutiny, if so detail below</th>
<th>Environmental or sustainability assessment undertaken?</th>
<th>Equality impact assessment undertaken?</th>
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<td>No</td>
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Approved by Cabinet Member/s on – 11 September 2017
Previous relevant Council or Executive decisions

Preferred Options Draft Local Plan Consultation considered by Cabinet in October 2015.
Publication Draft Local Plan Consultation considered by Cabinet in December 2016.

Consideration by Overview & Scrutiny

No.

Background Papers

No.

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