

Agenda Item IMD24

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2016/ 24

TITLE	Response of Wokingham Borough Council to the Consultation on the Issues and Options for the Bracknell Forest Comprehensive Local Plan
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration, Cllr Mark Ashwell
DATE AND TIME	1 August 2016 at 9.30am
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Director of Environment, Heather Thwaites
REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON	21 July 2016
VENUE	SF2

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To ensure that Bracknell Forest Borough Council's Local Plan has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Planning and Regeneration

- a) approves the comments outlined in this report
- b) approves that they be submitted as a formal response to the consultation from Bracknell Forest Borough Council on their Issues and Options consultation on their Comprehensive Local Plan

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report details the proposed response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation on the Issues and Options for the Bracknell Forest Comprehensive Local Plan.

The content of this report includes the following:

- Considering the impact of the Issues and Options for the Bracknell Forest Comprehensive Local Plan on Wokingham Borough.

Background

Bracknell Forest Borough Council is consulting on its Issues and Options to their Comprehensive Local Plan, between 13th June to 25th July 2016. Due to tight timescales, it has not been possible to gain executive member sign off by the deadline and this report has therefore been sent as a holding response subject to official sign off. At the Issues and Options Stage of the Comprehensive Local Plan, Bracknell Forest Borough Council are seeking views on the vision, objectives, range of issues to be covered and the suggested approach.

Analysis of Issues

Housing Need

The evidence underpinning the housing requirement within a local plan must be based upon full objectively assessed need (OAN) as stated in paragraph 159 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should:

“Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework.”

The Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016 sets out that 2,855 homes need to be provided per annum across the Western Housing Market Area (HMA), which comprises Wokingham, Reading, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest Boroughs. The OAN figure for Bracknell Forest Borough is 635 homes per annum between 2013-36.

The 635 dwellings per annum figure at this stage is solely a *housing need* figure. In order to produce a housing target figure, other factors such as supply constraints (for example, land availability, areas that flood, and environmental designations), and potential to accommodate needs from other local authority areas must be taken into consideration before a housing target for the Comprehensive Local Plan can be derived. Therefore the overall housing target figure for Bracknell Forest's Comprehensive Local Plan could be either higher or lower than the 635 dwellings per annum figure.

The 635 dwellings per annum figure though is indicative of what the housing target may be. Table 1 – Implications of OAN for Bracknell Forest illustrates that taking the OAN from 2013-36 into consideration and the amount of homes already committed through current permission and the existing development plan, there is a need to find sites for a minimum of 6,028 dwellings. It is not clear from Table 1 whether Bracknell Forest have taken into consideration potential windfalls in their supply. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that, *“Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.”* Wokingham Borough Council recommends that Bracknell Forest considers this point in calculating its current housing land supply.

Wokingham Borough Council requests that Bracknell Forest continues to engage with Wokingham Borough Council on matters regarding the accommodation of housing need across the Western Berkshire HMA through the Duty to Cooperate.

Business, Industrial and Storage Uses

Bracknell Forest Borough is within the Central Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) along with Wokingham Borough and Reading Borough. A study called the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has been commissioned which will look at assessing future needs for business, industrial and storage uses for the period to 2036 for the whole Central Berkshire FEMA. Bracknell Forest will need to take into consideration any unmet need within the Central Berkshire FEMA, and the distribution of housing across the Western Berkshire HMA (which Wokingham Borough is part of).

Wokingham Borough Council would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with Bracknell Forest and Reading Borough Council’s to help to meet employment land needs across the Central Berkshire FEMA.

Green Belt policy Review

Wokingham and Bracknell Forest Councils have worked together on a Green Belt review study.

Wokingham Borough would welcome the opportunity to continue to work closely with Bracknell Forest Borough Council in the development of the Green Belt policy given that the two authorities share green belt land.

Conclusion

This is an early stage of the Local Plan process and more detail will be provided at the next stage of the process. Bracknell Forest Borough Council must therefore continue to take into consideration the impact of the Local Plan on Wokingham Borough Council in terms of housing, cross-boundary movement, infrastructure, jobs and transportation. Wokingham BC therefore requests that Bracknell Forest Borough Council continues to engage with Wokingham Borough Council as work on the Local Plan progresses, through the Duty to Cooperate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
N/A

Cross-Council Implications
N/A

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Director – Finance and Resources	No comments
Monitoring Officer	No comments
Leader of the Council	No comments

List of Background Papers
Bracknell Forest Comprehensive Local Plan Issues and Options - http://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/portal/planning/clp_issues_options
Bracknell Forest Comprehensive Local Plan – evidence base documents - http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/evidencebaseforcomprehensivelocalplan

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