

Agenda Item IMD38

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD: 2015/38

TITLE	Considering the response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation on the Bracknell Forest Borough Council Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework – October 2015
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning & Highways
ON	26 November 2015
TIME	11.05 am
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director for the Environment
VENUE	Room SF1

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That the Bracknell Forest Borough Council Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework has minimal negative impacts upon the Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised through the duty to co-operate.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Planning and Highways:

- 1) approves the comments outlined in the report; and
- 2) that they are submitted as a formal response to Bracknell Forest Borough Council on the consultation on the Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report details the proposed response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation from Bracknell Forest Borough Council on the Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework

The content of this report discusses how Bracknell Forest Borough Council have considered the strategic issues which will require co-operation with other authorities/bodies and how it has been demonstrated that those issues which will concern Wokingham Borough have been appropriately highlighted for future consultation.

Background:

Local Planning Authorities, county councils and some other bodies have a legal duty to co-operate on planning for sustainable development, which is contained in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. This 'duty to cooperate' comprises a major consideration in the plan-making process given that it is the main vehicle for considering those matters which have greater than local significance following the abolition of regional planning. The Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework therefore outlines Bracknell Forest Borough Council's framework for meeting the duty to co-operate in developing its new local plan.

Analysis of Issues:

The purpose of the Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework is to identify the issues to address within Bracknell Forest Borough Council's local plan that are likely to be strategic matters and which will therefore fall under the duty to co-operate. The document also identifies the specified bodies with whom co-operation may be necessary.

The report highlights 11 areas in which it is considered that Bracknell Forest Borough Council will need to co-operate with other bodies. These areas are:

1. Housing including gypsies & travellers
2. Economic growth and jobs
3. Retail and town centres
4. Strategic transport
5. Utilities
6. Community facilities including health and education
7. Flood risk
8. Landscape including Green belt
9. Natural environment including Thames Basin Heath SPA
10. Climate change including Blackwater Valley
11. Historic environment

Of these 11 strategic matters, the Statement on Scoping of Issues and Bodies identifies that Wokingham Borough Council will be a relevant duty to co-operate body on all matters except for the historic environment. Wokingham Borough Council is in agreement with the approach taken in this document. Wokingham Borough Council is already working with Bracknell Forest and the other Berkshire authorities on certain areas including the need for housing. Wokingham Borough Council welcomes the duty to cooperate discussions on the identified areas.

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)	There are no direct costs associated with the duty-to-co-operate	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

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

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including property and priorities?)

<p>The framework for meeting the duty to co-operate in developing its new local plan sets out those areas on which Bracknell Forest Borough Council will engage with Wokingham Borough Council. Wokingham Borough Council welcomes duty to co-operate discussions on the identified areas. The Bracknell Forest framework for meeting the duty to co-operate in developing its new local plan does not dictate the specific measures that Bracknell Forest Borough Council intends to use to undertake the duty to co-operate, but it is intended that such discussions will be had with each specific duty to co-operate body in order to seek a way forward. The framework for meeting the duty to co-operate will help to ensure that cross boundary infrastructure impacts are taken into account concerning those strategic issues that the framework refers to.</p>

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES
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Director - Resources	No comment
Monitoring Officer	No comment
Leader of the Council	Supports all the recommendations

List of Background Papers

Bracknell Forest Borough Council's Scope of Local Plan and Duty to Co-operate Framework - October 2015
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