

Agenda Item IMD9

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD: 2016 / 9

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| TITLE | Consultation response from Wokingham Borough Council to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on the Proposed Modifications to the Submission Local Plan |
| DECISION TO BE MADE BY | John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways |
| DATE AND TIME | 8 February 2016, 11am |
| WARD | Non-specific. |
| DIRECTOR | Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment. |
| REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON | 29 January 2016 |
| VENUE | Room SF1, Civic Offices, Shute End |

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That the final Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan ensures that there are minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Planning and Highways

- 1) approves the comments outlined in this report which is to support the modifications to the Basingstoke and Deane Submission Local Plan; and
- 2) that they be submitted as a formal response to the consultation from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on their Proposed Main Modifications to the Submission Local Plan.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report details the proposed response of Wokingham Borough Council to the consultation from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on their Proposed Main Modifications to their Submission Local Plan.

The content of this report includes:

- Support for the proposed modifications concerning gypsy and traveller accommodation provision
- Support for the proposed modifications concerning supply and delivery of housing

Background

Wokingham BC (March 2012) objected to the quantum of housing development (594 per annum) required for Basingstoke & Deane Borough between 2011 and 2027 as it was below the requirements of both the South East Plan (945 per annum) and the information on household need indicated by the government's projections (900 per annum from the 2008 projections).

The pre-submission Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan raised the proposed dwellings per annum figure to 748, and again Wokingham Borough Council raised concerns in October 2013. This was mainly because Wokingham Borough Council required further information on migration and commuting flows between Basingstoke & Deane and both Reading & Wokingham Boroughs. This further information was required because Wokingham Borough Council had concerns that the proposed housing target of 748pa did not fit with Basingstoke and Deane's economic growth aspirations. There was concern that if enough housing was not provided in Basingstoke and Deane alongside the proposed economic growth, this could have potentially caused housing growth pressures on neighbouring Boroughs such as Reading and Wokingham, and also lead to an increase in traffic on the A33. Since then, Wokingham Borough Council has received further information on migration and commuting flows and confirmed on 18th November 2014 that Wokingham was satisfied by the migration data between the two authorities and therefore no longer objected to Basingstoke and Deane's Local Plan based on the evidence then available.

In October 2014, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council submitted its Local Plan to the Secretary of State (in reality this is the Planning Inspectorate) for examination and the Local Plan currently remains at examination. An Inspector conducted an Exploratory Meeting on Basingstoke and Deane's Submission Local Plan on 11th December 2014. The meeting was held because the Inspector considered there to be a number of soundness issues with the submission local plan. The issues included uncertainty over the proposed housing target figure and the Objectively Assessed Housing Need presented within their submitted Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), the robustness of the information in the Sustainability Appraisal, environmental issues such as the environmental impact on strategic sites, an assessment of whether the proposed and existing infrastructure would be able to accommodate the proposed growth to the South West of Basingstoke, strengthening of the policy on Gypsies and Travellers and more detail needed on the strategic sites, and an inclusion of an employment target or range in the local plan.

The additional work was undertaken and this resulted in a number of proposed main modifications or changes to the Submission Local Plan. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council undertook a mid-examination consultation from 11 May 2015 to 22 June 2015 in advance of the Local Plan hearings. Wokingham Borough Council responded to the proposed main modifications or changes to the Submission Local Plan and raised an objection to the proposed housing target and the definition of the Housing Market Area.

In August 2015, Wokingham Borough Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council held a Duty to Cooperate Meeting, and Wokingham BC consequently removed the objection as the Council was satisfied that both the Housing Market Area had been defined robustly and that the housing target was appropriate.

The hearings took place between 5 October 2015 and 11 November 2015 and have

now concluded.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council are now consulting (between 21 Dec 2015 and 8 February 2016) upon its Proposed Main Modifications to the Submission Local Plan 2011-2029.

Analysis of Issues

Supply of gypsy and traveler sites

The updated Basingstoke and Deane Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment (August 2015) demonstrates that there is a need for 16 additional pitches and 3 emergency stopping places. Consequently, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have proposed to modify Policy CN5 (PM86) to, *“The Council will make provision for 16 additional gypsy and traveller pitches and 3 temporary stopping places...”* Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council is therefore seeking to ensure that the plan meets the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community and therefore Wokingham Borough Council has no concerns regarding this modification to policy CN5.

Supply and delivery of housing

Policy SS5 sets out that the Council will support parish/town council’s and neighbourhood forum groups to deliver 900 dwellings over the plan period. The proposed main modifications (PM141) also seeks to strengthen policy SS5 by stating that the settlements of Bramley, Kingsclere, Oakley, Overton and Whitchurch will now deliver *“at least”* a certain number of dwellings as opposed to the previous policy wording which was to *“approximately”* deliver a certain number of dwellings, i.e. this might have originally meant that fewer dwellings were to be provided. Wokingham Borough Council support this proposed modification to policy SS5.

Further strengthening of policy SS5 (PM141) is proposed by adding that, *“For the five named settlements, if a neighbourhood plan/neighbourhood development order (Regulation 16) has not been submitted by April 2017, the Council will consider the need to allocate additional sites.”* Wokingham Borough Council support this modification as it sets a deadline for the production of neighbourhood development plans and provides a contingency plan for housing delivery if neighbourhood plans are not progressed.

PM143 strengthens the supporting text to policy SS5 by clarifying the quantity of homes that will be delivered and where these homes will be delivered. Wokingham BC supports this proposed change.

Basingstoke and Deane have assumed a housing target of 15,300 dwellings from 2011-2029 and this is based upon their Objectively Assessed Need (OAN). Basingstoke and Deane state they have a housing supply of 15,512 dwellings and can therefore meet their requirement over the plan period. The Inspector's final report should be published by the end of March 2016. The final report will set out the Inspector's conclusions on the Objective Assessment of Housing Need, and if the Inspector is satisfied with the robustness of the calculation of the OAN, Wokingham Borough Council raises no objections.

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

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

| | |
|---|------------|
| Director – Finance and Resources | No comment |
| Monitoring Officer | No comment |
| Leader of the Council | No comment |

List of Background Papers

Basingstoke and Deane Submission Local Plan 2011-2029:

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/page/34953/Submission%20Local%20Plan.pdf>

Schedule A: Proposed Main Modifications to the Submission Local Plan Following Local Plan Examination Hearings: <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/1383.pdf>

Other relevant documents on the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan 2011-2029 found here: <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/localplanmods>

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