

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Bromsgrove District Plan 2011 – 2030 Objective Assessment of Housing Need

**Council**

24<sup>th</sup> September 2014

### Bromsgrove District Plan 2011 – 2030 Objective Assessment of Housing Need

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	Yes
Non Key Decision	Yes

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 (BDP) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate to undergo its Examination in Public (EIP) on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Initial hearing sessions took place in June 2014 with interim conclusions publicised in July 2014 (appendix 2). The Inspector whilst satisfied with many elements of the plan to date has raised some queries about the objective assessment of housing need figure being proposed. Further work was carried out to look into this issue in August 2014 (appendix 3) which presented the Inspector with a range of housing numbers which could be considered suitable. The Inspector has partially responded to the additional work undertaken and has confirmed that the Council needs to be more explicit on what it considers its objective assessment of housing need figure to be. The Inspector has now confirmed that the postponed hearings can take place at the beginning of December.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove District plan objective assessment of housing need, is a letter which contains further information and justification for the housing need figure being suggested to the Inspector. It is this response that Members are being asked to consider, the revised figure being proposed is 6648 dwellings for the period 2011 -2030. It must be noted that the housing requirement in the submitted version of the plan remains at 7000.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Council is asked to
- (a) **Endorse Bromsgrove District plan objective assessment of housing need letter (Appendix 1) for submission to the planning inspectorate.**
  - (b) **Delegate authority to the Head of Service/Director and the Strategic Planning Manager, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to prepare and submit the necessary documents to support the examination of the Local Plan; and**
  - (c) **Delegate authority to the Head of Service/ Director and the Strategic Planning Manager, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder**

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**for Planning, to agree any minor changes to the plan where appropriate during the examination.**

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The Proposed submission and subsequent Examination in Public of the Bromsgrove District plan is a costly exercise, and has been accounted for in current budgets. It is unclear at this time whether or not this will be sufficient funding to cover all costs incurred especially if the examination is extended beyond its current duration. It is the Council's responsibility to pay for the Planning Inspectorate to examine the plan currently this stands at £993 per day. The fees for examinations were set under the Town and Country Planning (Costs of Inquiries etc.) (Standard Daily Amount) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/3227)

**Legal Implications**

- 3.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that Local Authorities should publish a plan which they think is sound. The published plan should be the one they submit to the Planning Inspectorate. If as a result of this additional work or any other element of the examination changes to the plan are required the Council can ask the Inspector to make suitable modifications under 20(7C) of the act.
- 3.3 Regulations 24 -31 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) are the regulations by which the examination is taking place.

**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.4 On the 17<sup>th</sup> July this year the Planning Inspector examining the Bromsgrove District Plan issued some interim conclusions which required officers to do some additional work to help establish what the Districts objective assessment of housing need is.
- 3.5 In line with the recommendations in those conclusions, work has now been undertaken on the following tasks.
- The jobs led growth scenario has been re-run to take into account official Office for National Statistics 2012 population projections, these are the most up to date official projections.

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- We have applied reductions to commuting patterns to reflect recent trends to assess what impacts they would have on the numbers of houses required for the future.
  - And we have had a further look at housing and employment market signals to assess what they might be saying about future housing needs.
- 3.6 The outcome of all this work assessed together means the housing need in Bromsgrove is less than was previously thought. Further consideration of these scenarios as part of the examination process may present challenges to the validity of the numbers, as is normal in all planning hearings at this stage. Appendix 1 contains the full justification for the number now being suggested as the objective assessed housing need figure.
- 3.7 Whilst the numbers generated from this additional scenario work indicate a possible lower housing need of 6648 dwellings between 2011 and 2030 which includes an uplift of 20% to take into account 'market signals,' it must be stressed that the scale of any reductions will not affect the allocations in the current plan (former ADRs); they will all still need to come forward. Any reduction should it take place would simply mean less land for houses will need to be found as part of the green belt review.
- 3.8 The response at appendix 1, if endorsed by Council, would allow for reconvened hearing sessions to take place in December 2014. A straightforward and successful outcome to these hearings would mean the Bromsgrove District plan could be adopted in early to mid 2015. Should changes to the plan be required then the timetable is less clear and dependant on the extent of the changes needed.

#### **Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.9 All information concerning the Examination of the Bromsgrove District plan is being placed on our examination web page [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/examination](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/examination) and an independent programme officer has been employed to ensure that all the examination procedures run smoothly.

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The possibility exists that the objective assessment of housing need being suggested to the inspector is challenged as part of the Examination in Public and not accepted by the Inspector, this is a normal part of examination proceedings. The Council may be asked to consider suggesting changes to the plan which ensures it is sound, should this be the case these changes will be brought back to the council in due course.

#### **5. APPENDICES**

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Appendix 1 - Bromsgrove District Plan Objective Assessment of Housing Need letter.

Appendix 2 - Interim Conclusions 17/7/14

Appendix 3 - AMION report 29/8/14

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

All the information concerning the Bromsgrove District plan and its examination can be seen on [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/examination](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/examination)

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