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**Duty to Co-Operate with Redditch Borough Council**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Philip Thomas
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Report Author Mike Dunphy	Job Title: Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager Contact email: m.dunphy@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes SPSG
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet RECOMMEND to the Council that**

**The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at Appendix 1 between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council is agreed.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP) was adopted in January 2017, within days the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No4 (BORLP4) was also adopted. These plans were prepared in tandem in order to allow for the planning inspectorate to jointly examine the Redditch Cross Boundary Development policy, which will deliver housing growth on the edge of Redditch in Bromsgrove District.
- 2.2 The BDP review has been underway for a number of years, this was always the intention as the BDP did not fully allocate all of the housing needs identified in the 2017 version of the plan. In order to inform the plan review a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) has been commissioned and completed. One of the key roles of this work is to fully understand the likely amount of housing and employment development the plan review needs to deliver.
- 2.3 As members will be aware the housing needs of Redditch Borough Council (RBC) is also of significance to Bromsgrove as it has been likely for some time that the RBC housing needs are likely to reduce. In

order to inform this position, separately RBC have also commissioned a (HEDNA) to help determined what the development needs of a Redditch plan review are likely to be. The table below summarises the current position in relation to both authorities.

		<b>2022 – 2040 (18 years)</b>
<b>Redditch:</b>	Need	165dpa / 2970
	Supply	5211
	<b>Surplus</b>	+2241
<b>Bromsgrove:</b>	Need	383dpa / 6894
	Supply	2511 (approx.)
	<b>Deficit</b>	4383

As can be seen above whilst the housing needs of Bromsgrove at 383 per annum are relatively consistent with the previous requirement of 363, the housing need of Redditch has dropped considerably to 165 per annum as opposed to 337 in the current BORLP4. When considered alongside the supply figures, which are the number of dwellings with planning permission attributed to each authority, it is clear that RBC currently has significantly more housing supply (circa 2241) than it requires. As articulated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at appendix 1, RBC have committed that any oversupply in housing needs will be 'handed back' to BDC.

- 2.4 In order to ensure that the new Local Plans for both RBC and BDC can reflect the housing issues above, a similar process of aligning plan making is now being suggested. This allows for a coordinated approach to setting out how the housing needs across both districts will be met taking into account the current allocations. Further to this in some instances the alignment of plans could allow for time and financial savings to be realised as some additional plan making activities could be undertaken jointly.
- 2.5 It must be stressed that BDC will still have a plan that considers the planning issues that Bromsgrove District faces in detail, the process being suggested is not one of a shared plan which covers both authorities. There will remain two predominantly separate plans which are only joined by the reallocation of housing numbers from the current plans.
- 2.6 The Bromsgrove plan is progressing significantly with a preferred option consultation scheduled for publication and consultation in September this year. This consultation will identify the draft

development strategy for the period up to 2040, of which a coherent approach to the housing issues above needs to be factored in.

- 2.7 In addition to the shared understanding on housing issues as demonstrated above, an issue which both local authorities will be addressing in the new local plans is the possibility of accommodating some of the housing needs of the wider Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Areas (GBBCHMA). As yet the details of what, if anything, is going to be required are unclear.
- 2.8 Should requests be made of RBC to accommodate housing needs of the GBBCHMA, it is highly likely that RBC would then look to BDC for assistance due to the constrained nature of Redditch Borough and the lack of deliverable land.
- 2.9 The MOU addresses this issue, and it is proposed that BDC and RBC, where relevant, coordinate their responses to ensure that a comprehensive approach is being presented to all the other authorities in the GBBCHMA.
- 2.10 The full MOU can be viewed at appendix 1, but in summary it is proposed that the areas where the Councils work together at this stage are limited to:
- A shared understanding and approach to RBC's housing needs,
  - Agreement to work on plans which are aligned to address the RBC housing needs issue
  - Joint consideration of any requests from the GBBCHMA to meet additional growth needs.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 A budget exists for the production of the new Bromsgrove Plan Review, working in conjunction with RBC on some plan making activities should introduce savings. As the plan progresses members will be notified as these savings occur. It is expected that elements of the Plans' Examination in Public will be held jointly which will reduce the cost to BDC as opposed to holding separate examination hearing sessions.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Duty to Cooperate remains a legal duty under the current planning system. The MOU shows the current understanding between the Councils at this present time, although it is non binding. In due course as plan making progresses a Statement of Common Ground will be

prepared to formally set out the agreed positions of both Councils with regards to the respective plans.

**5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The agreement of the MOU provides clarity on the housing needs of BDC and RBC. The preferred option local plan is likely to impact on all of the strategic purposes either directly or indirectly, this will be considered and reported on in the officer report supporting the preferred option.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 The development of Bromsgrove Plan review will have significant Climate Change implications, this will be considered in detail as the plan progresses and will be reported on fully in due course.

**6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 There are no Equalities or diversity implications directly connected with the MOU, as the plan progress an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

**Operational Implications**

- 6.2 There are no specific operational implications, the Strategic Planning team is resourced to develop plans for both BDC and RBC concurrently.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 BDC is required to review its local plan. As part of the review the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate will need to be met. Whilst entering into the MOU with RBC does not ensure that this will be the case, as there will be other DTC considerations to consider as the plan progresses, early engagement in this manner demonstrates positive plan making and allows for BDC to clearly set out the draft development strategy in the preferred option.
- 7.2 It is acknowledged that there are reforms to the planning system which may impact on the development of the Bromsgrove Plan Review. At this

stage until more is known about the detail and the timescales for these reforms plan making should continue under the current regime.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – RBC/BDC Memorandum of Understanding, Duty to Cooperate on housing need, plan making, and the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**  
2022

20<sup>th</sup> July

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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Philip Thomas	15 <sup>th</sup> June
Lead Director / Head of Service	Sue Hanley / Ruth Bamford	15 <sup>th</sup> June
Financial Services	Peter Carpenter	15 <sup>th</sup> June
Legal Services	Claire Felton	15 <sup>th</sup> June
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	