

# Overview and Scrutiny Board

Report subject	<b>Update Report from the Local Plan Working Group</b>
Meeting date	17 May 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report outlines the actions and any recommendation made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Local Plan Working Group at any meetings which have taken place since the last update to the Overview and Scrutiny Board
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b> The Overview and Scrutiny Board consider and agree the actions and recommendations outlined in the report below.
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that the work of the Local Plan working group receives wider member engagement and endorsement.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr P Broadhead, Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning
Corporate Director	Kate Ryan, Chief Operations Officer
Contributors	<p>Working Group Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Member – Cllr S Bartlett</li> <li>• Christchurch – Cllr M Phipps and Cllr S McCormack</li> <li>• Bournemouth – Cllr D Kelsey and Cllr K Wilson</li> <li>• Poole – Cllr M Brooke and Cllr F Rice</li> </ul> <p>Support Officers:</p> <p>Mark Axford, Planning Policy Manager Laura Bright, Senior Planning Officer</p>
Wards	All – Authority Wide
Classification	For Update and Information

## Background detail

The Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting in December 2020 agreed to establish a working group to look at the development of the Local Plan. It was agreed that the

Chairman of the Board act as the Lead Member for the group. The Portfolio Holder had suggested that this would be a good issue for the Board to be involved in and contribute to at a wider level through a working Group.

The Working Group agreed at its initial meeting that any recommendations made by the working group should come back through the Overview and Scrutiny Board for agreement on a regular basis. This report will briefly outline the issues considered by the working group and any recommendations that the group agreed to make.

### **Local Plan Working Group Meeting Report**

The last meeting of the Local Plan Working Group was held on Wednesday 7 April.

The meeting considered matters relating to development within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Greenbelt. The Group were informed that new data on affordability that feeds into the Government's standard methodology for calculating housing need has meant that the housing target for BCP had been increased to 2,700 homes per year. This meant that despite considering opportunities in the urban area and opportunities for increasing densities a shortfall as identified at approximately 5,500 still remained.

To comply with the Local Plan process there was a need to consider all options to meet the targets for housing need. The Working Group therefore considered all sites across BCP within the greenbelt which had been promoted by developers for potential development. There were a number of different factors looked at for all sites to determine harm or viability of development. The issues relevant to the consideration were whether sites were within easy reach of district centres or public transport routes, what development was already in place, if the aims of the greenbelt were protected, flooding and environmental factors.

The Working Group considered the process for going out to consultation on these sites as part of the next stage of the Local Plan process. In particular the issues considered whether all the sites should be included within the consultation or only those sites which may be viable, the amount of information provided on each site within the consultation and whether the Council should provide any commentary on these sites or leave it completely open.

#### **The recommendations agreed by the working group were:**

That the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning and the Planning Policy Team be recommended to include all potential sites within the identified BCP Greenbelt as part of the public consultation.

The Working Group suggested that these sites should be qualified with some factual information on the constraints of the sites but without further commentary from the Council.

#### **The reasons for the recommendation were:**

The Working group considered that only consulting on some of the sites would not be transparent or equitable for the public and may appear that the Council was steering the

public. It was suggested that the consultation should include factual data available in order to help inform feedback regarding the impact of potentially developing the sites.

**The Working Group also agreed the following:**

The Working Group agreed that the government methodology being used to determine the housing requirements was unhelpful, being based on out of date 2014 Office of National Statistics figures rather than up to date 2018 figures and should be challenged in some way. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next meeting alongside moving forward with development of the Local Plan.

For further explanation of the governments approach to applying the standard method extracts from the NPPG 'Housing and Economic Needs Assessment' are included at the end of this report.

A Councillor requested further information on the sites in question with regards to their impact on sustainable transport and requested either information be circulated or an additional session on this. The Chair suggested an additional meeting may be required on this. It was noted this would be co-ordinated with the Local Transport Plan. Further information on high frequency bus routes to be provided.

## **Extracts from the NPPG ‘Housing and Economic Needs Assessment’**

### **What is the standard method for assessing local housing need?**

The National Planning Policy Framework expects strategic policy-making authorities to follow the standard method in this guidance for assessing local housing need.

The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply.

The standard method set out below identifies a minimum annual housing need figure. It does not produce a housing requirement figure.

Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20190220

Revision date: 20 02 2019

### **Is the use of the standard method for strategic policy making purposes mandatory?**

No, if it is felt that circumstances warrant an alternative approach but authorities can expect this to be scrutinised more closely at examination. There is an expectation that the standard method will be used and that any other method will be used only in exceptional circumstances.

Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 2a-003-20190220

Revision date: 20 02 2019

**Why are 2014-based household projections used as the baseline for the standard method?** The 2014-based household projections are used within the standard method to provide stability for planning authorities and communities, ensure that historic under-delivery and declining affordability are reflected, and to be consistent with the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.

Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 2a-005-20190220

Revision date: 20 02 2019

### **If authorities use a different method how will this be tested at examination?**

..... Any method which relies on using household projections more recently published than the 2014-based household projections will not be considered to be following the standard method as set out in [paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework](#). As explained above, it is not considered that these projections provide an appropriate basis for use in the standard method.

Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 2a-015-20190220

Revision date: 20 02 2019