
Duty to Co-Operate with Bromsgrove District Council

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Report Author Ruth Bamford	Job Title: Head of Planning Regeneration and Leisure Contact email: ruth.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Yes via Planning Advisory Panel
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

Executive Committee RECOMMEND to the Council that

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

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2017 Redditch Borough Council (RBC) adopted the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No4 (BORLP4). At the same time Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) adopted the Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP). A significant element of these plans was the inclusion of the Redditch Cross Boundary Development policy, which will deliver housing growth on the edge of Redditch in Bromsgrove District.
- 2.2 The BORLP4 is now needs to be reviewed as advised in the Executive report of the 26th October 2021. A key element of the review will be the amount of development that the new Redditch Local Plan will need to provide for. Since October officers have commissioned a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). The role of the HEDNA is to look in more detail at local housing issues, as well as the requirement for new housing as required by government. It also plays a key role in assessing how much employment development will be required to compliment the housing growth. The full findings of the HEDNA were reported to members at the most recent Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) meeting.

2.3 The HEDNA for Redditch Borough recommends that review of the local plan should accommodate no more dwellings than is suggested by the government's standard housing method. This equates to 165 dwellings per annum at the time of the HEDNA's completion. It is highly likely that as plan making progresses the proposed housing figure will alter slightly due to the annual release of statistical data that populates the governments standard housing methodology calculation.

2.4 These development figures are significantly lower than the 336 dwellings per annum that was previously identified in the BORLP4. The impact of these revised housing figures is that not all of the housing development identified for the needs of Redditch Borough in the BORLP4 are now required in the next plan period to meet its needs. It is pertinent to note that of total 6400 dwellings to be developed under the BORLP4, 3400 are located in the Bromsgrove District. The sites to accommodate the 3400 dwellings were identified through the joint working and Duty to Cooperate the Councils previously entered into.

2.5 The table below shows the likely Redditch housing requirement for the next plan period which is being proposed as 2022 – 2040

		2022 – 2040 (18 years)
Redditch:	Need	165dpa / 2970
	Supply	5211
	Surplus	+2241

As can be seen there are currently 5211 dwellings in the Redditch housing supply, this is 2241 dwellings above the new requirement of 2970 dwellings for the period up to 2040. In simple terms this means that Redditch Borough has significantly more housing attributed to it than it needs up to 2040.

2.6 Under the current planning system, the Duty to Cooperate remains, and as such RBC needs to engage with other local authorities on plan making. Due to the nature of the existing plans and the shared policy on cross boundary housing, some engagement with BDC has taken place to explore the housing issue which is presented above. This early engagement is key to the development of the new Redditch Local Plan and the strategic direction which it can take.

2.7 What is clear is that RBC is not likely to have to commit to developing more greenfield land either in the Borough of Redditch or surrounding authorities to meet its housing needs, and that some of the housing

which is being provided in Bromsgrove District (circa 2241 dwellings) can now be apportioned back to BDC, as per the table at 2.5 above.

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 It must be stressed that RBC will still have a plan that considers the planning issues that Redditch Borough 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.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 What appears to be clear is that the evidence which supported cross boundary development is unlikely to change significantly. Although it would need to be considered as part of plan making, its likely that large parts of the south west of Redditch Borough remain undevelopable largely due to infrastructure constraints. Should this position remain any requests from the GBBCHMA of Redditch Borough to provide for the growth needs of the GBBCHMA could lead to RBC looking to BDC for assistance.
- 2.12 The MOU addresses this issue, and it is proposed that RBC and BDC, where relevant, coordinate their responses on this issue to ensure that a comprehensive approach is being presented to all the other authorities in the GBBCHMA.
- 2.13 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 Redditch Local Plan, working in conjunction with BDC 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 RBC 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 RBC, it allows for a strategic direction to be set to consider what development is required for the future to compliment the already committed housing growth. The new local plan is likely to impact on all of the strategic purposes either directly or indirectly, this will be considered and reported on as the plan progresses.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 The development of a new local plan for Redditch will have significant Climate Change implications, this will be considered in detail as the plan progresses and will be report 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 or no specific operational implications, the Strategic Planning team is resourced to develop plans for both RBC and BDC concurrently.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 RBC is required to review it 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 BDC 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 RBC to set the strategic direction for it plan with clarity from the outset.

- 7.2 It is acknowledged that there are reforms to the planning system which may impact on the development of a new Redditch Local Plan. 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

Executive Committee
2022

14th June

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Matt Dormer	24 th May
Lead Director / Head of Service	Sue Hanley / Ruth Bamford	18 th May
Financial Services	Peter Carpenter	18 th May
Legal Services	Claire Felton	18 th May
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	