

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 29 JULY 2021
title: STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING
principal author: COLIN HIRST – HEAD OF REGENERATION & HOUSING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To agree to the publication of the consultant's final report.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To deliver a co-ordinated approach to planning through up-to-date planning policies and to meet the housing needs of all sections of the community.
- Corporate Priorities – To protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of the area and to match the supply of homes in our area with the identified housing needs.
- Other Considerations – None.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will be aware that part of the key housing evidence required for the Local Plan Review is the Strategic Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (SHENA). Work has been previously undertaken on the preparation of a study by Turley Associates who were appointed to carry out this work in 2019.

2.2 Members will recall that the need to undertake a SHENA was considered at a meeting of this Committee on 1 October 2019 (Minute 161 refers). The report set out the importance of progressing this work to inform the Local Plan and to provide an updated housing requirement. In progressing the work, issues were raised with the consultants being asked to undertake further work when the matter was considered at a meeting of this Committee held on 6 February 2020 (Minute 593 refers).

2.3 Work was undertaken by the consultants taking onboard matters raised by Members and they produced their final report in April 2020. This report was not published as work on the Local Plan process was deferred. A copy of the final report can be viewed using the following link:

https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/13382/strategic_housing_and_economic_needs_assessment.pdf

2.4 The proposal in brief therefore is that the report is published for reference but that its findings in relation to housing requirement remains subject to further scenario development as part of the plan-making process.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The SHENA provides a range of housing data that helps inform the Local Plan position. At the time that the previous work was being considered a key element was to seek to establish an updated housing requirement to inform both plan preparation and decision-making. Members determined that the most appropriate approach was to undertake the establishment of the housing requirement through the Local Plan process. In the meantime, the Council would rely on the Government's standard methodology to determine operational housing requirements in line with Government guidance.

3.2 The Local Plan process will develop a new updated requirement which will be a key component of the forthcoming work in relation to the issues and options (Regulation 18 stage) that is programmed for consultation in January 2022. Members will be asked to consider further reports on scenario development as part of that process to arrive at options for housing requirements. The matter will be considered in more detail by the Local Plan Working Group. In line with government guidance, it is considered appropriate to publish the consultants' final study at this stage on the basis it will be feeding into the development of the issues and options and that it does contain other evidence that the Council will be able to utilise.

3.3 Publishing the report is in line with guidance to make available any evidence which the Council will be relying on as soon as practicable. This does not mean that the Council has adopted the findings of the study.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – There are no resource implications in relation to the matters considered in this report. The study has been commissioned and completed.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Government guidance promotes that evidence that Local Planning Authorities will use to inform their plan-making process is published as appropriate to enable parties to be aware of the information the Council is using. Publication of this report would demonstrate transparency.
- Political – Housing matters have a high public profile.
- Reputation – The actions set out in this report demonstrate that the Council is well-managed and is proactive in taking steps to ensure it can plan appropriately for housing in the borough in line with national policy.
- Equality & Diversity – No issues.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Agree to the publication of the consultant's final report which provides the basis for further scenario development to assist the plan-making process.



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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information please ask for Colin Hirst, extension 4503.

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