

## **RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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meeting date: THURSDAY 12 MAY 2022  
title: RIBBLE VALLEY LOCAL PLAN SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL –  
SCOPING REPORT  
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
PLANNING  
principal author: MARK WALECZEK – PLANNING OFFICER

### **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform members of the Sustainability Appraisal process as part of the ongoing Ribble Valley Local Plan Review.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
  - Community Objectives – To ensure that the borough remains a sustainable place to live and work.
  - Corporate Priorities – The authority has a legal duty to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of its Local Plan.
  - Other Considerations – None.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Members will be aware that work is progressing on the production of a new Local Plan for the Borough.
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local authorities to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal [SA] of proposals within a plan throughout its preparation. The role of an SA is to promote sustainable development by assessing the impacts of the plan on environmental, economic, and social sustainability objectives. The appraisal runs alongside the plan-making process from initial scoping through to adoption, assessing and re-assessing the sustainability implications of the plan as it evolves through the regulation stages. The SA process, and its input toward plan preparation, is demonstrated in Appendix A.
- 2.3 Following an invitation to quote, the Council have commissioned work to JBA Consultants to undertake the SA process on behalf of the Council. This work will include assessing the Local Plan at key stages of the plan-making process including Issues and Options, publication, submission, and adoption.

### **3 ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Council is due to consult with the public on issues and options relating to the new Local Plan as part of a Regulation 18 consultation. To make a sustainability-based assessment of the options put forward, baseline data, objectives and a measuring framework must be agreed which the plan can be measured against.
- 3.2 JBA Consulting have prepared an initial scoping report as part of the SA which proposes and agrees the technical scope of the appraisal, the objectives against

which the emerging plan will be measured against and the framework through which the appraisal will be undertaken. The full report can be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/downloads/download/474/sustainability-appraisal---scoping-report>

- 3.3 The draft scoping report was subject to a consultation with the statutory consultation bodies including Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency between 12 November and 17 December 2021. Comments received have been reviewed and the scope of the assessment revised where relevant. All consultee responses can be viewed within the scoping report.
- 3.4 The next formal output in this process will be the full SA report, documenting the assessment of the publication version of the Local Plan against SA objectives.

#### **4 RISK ASSESSMENT**

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

- Resources – There is provision within existing resources to engage with JBA consultants to contribute to the SA process as it continues.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – The Council has a legal duty to undertake a sustainability appraisal of its Local Plan.
- Political – There is significant interest in any potential development pressures upon villages, services and infrastructure within the Borough.
- Reputation – Sustainable development is an issue of significance in the local community.
- Equality & Diversity – No issues identified.

#### **5 RECOMMEND THAT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 Approve the publication of the scoping report as part of the initial stage of the SA and invite comment as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review.
- 5.2 Agree that the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan continues, and future outcomes reported to members where appropriate.



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#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

For further information please ask for Mark Waleczek, extension 4581.

## APPENDIX A

Flowchart demonstrating the input of the Sustainability Appraisal into Local Plan preparation.

