

FOR: COUNCIL MEETING

17 JULY 2018

(BUFF ENCLOSURE)

**REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

PRESENT:

Councillors Cox (Chairman), Drinkwater (Vice-Chair), Mrs Ealand, Mrs Evans, Mrs Grange, Marshall, Warfield and Mrs Stanhope MBE.

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule No.17 Councillor Wilcox attended the meeting).

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Baker and Mrs Fisher. The Cabinet Member, Councillor Pritchard also gave his apologies and Councillor Wilcox attended in his place.

At the meeting held on 20th June 2018 the following matters were considered:

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 The terms of reference for the Committee were circulated and was noted by members

2. WORK PROGRAMME

- 2.1 The Committee discussed the work programme for the forthcoming year and it was reported that in addition to what had been circulated, it had been arranged to have the Environment Agency attend the September meeting to discuss its rationale regarding providing advice on planning applications.
- 2.2 Members requested an item on back land development policies as many applications had come forward recently and it was agreed that the Chairman would discuss this further with Officers.
- 2.3 It was requested to have an initial briefing paper on performance of self builds in the district as the government were encouraging this. It was reported that there was a Council register that helped match interest to opportunities and so data could be reported.
- 2.4 It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen would be meeting with the Cabinet Member to discuss forthcoming items where the Committee could assist and have an input. Members were encouraged to forward any ideas for the work programme to the Chairman.

3. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

- 3.1 The Committee received a report giving an update on the Local Plan and related spatial planning matters. It was reported that the Local Plan Allocations document had now been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and was now awaiting an Examination date. It

was then reported that the consultation on the Local Plan Review Scoping document had concluded with around 1000 comments received which were now being analysed by Officers with a report being brought to Members in due course.

- 3.2 The main area of discussion was centred on the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area Housing Shortfall and the Strategic Growth Study report that had been commissioned by the 14 Local Authorities that make up the Birmingham Housing Market Area, prepared by GL Hearn and Wood. It was emphasised that the study did not recommend numbers of housing to be allocated to each area but was aid to help authorities in the preparation of their respective local plans and to ensure that any future development was appropriate for the area with adequate infrastructure.
- 3.3 Members had concerns as to the impact on the greenbelt and blurred boundaries with other areas and felt the report implied that it should be built on before other sites as the easier option. The Committee also sought reassurance that Birmingham City Council had considered all available brownfield sites. It was reported that not all sites within Birmingham would be allocated for housing or indeed suitable for housing and some might be for employment and other non-housing uses. It was confirmed that the independent study had verified the number of houses required to meet Birmingham's housing supply. It was also reported that from the study, this housing number shortfall had reduced by 10,000 since the original 38,000 figure and with the scope for higher density housing, this could reduce even further.
- 3.4 Members felt that infrastructure was already stretched in the Lichfield District area and this would have to be addressed before any major development occurred.
- 3.5 There was further concern that the study was based on a date range up to 2031 and would set a standard of taking on housing beyond this date.
- 3.6 It was noted that there was an Officer Steering Group for the whole 14 authorities and a position statement would be published in the near future. This would assist those local authorities going through imminent local plan examinations.
- 3.7 The status of the Brookhay proposal near Alrewas was raised in the context of future development in the District, noting that the Lichfield Local Plan Inspector had not discounted this as an option. It was confirmed that there remained keen developer interest in this site and this would need to be considered alongside other locations as part of the Local Plan Review. It was noted that Neighbourhood Plans would be progressing to referendums soon.
- 3.8 The following was agreed.
 - (a) That the progress associated with the Local Plan Allocations and Local Plan Review be noted;
 - (b) That the issues surrounding the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area Housing Shortfall and the Strategic Growth Study be noted;
 - (c) That the proposal to update the Council's Statement of Community Involvement be noted; and
 - (d) The recent progress in relation to neighbourhood plans within Lichfield District be noted.

Councillor Richard Cox
Chairman

Economic Growth, Environment and Development (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee