

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COUNCIL

25TH APRIL 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

BRIDGEND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) DRAFT REVIEW REPORT

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Council's approval to undertake targeted consultation on the draft Bridgend LDP Review Report (attached at Appendix 1). The draft Review Report sets out the proposed extent of likely changes to the existing LDP (2006-2021) and seeks to confirm the revision procedure to be followed in preparing a replacement LDP. It is proposed that the Replacement LDP will cover a plan period up to 2033, which is the end of a 15 year plan period that will commence in 2018.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) is a high level strategy which must be prepared by the Council. The LDP sets out in land-use terms the priorities and objectives of the Corporate Plan. A future Replacement LDP will be required to express in land-use terms, the wellbeing objectives and priorities of the Bridgend Public Services Board's Well-being Plan.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Members will recall that a report was presented to Council on the 28th February 2018 outlining the letter and request from the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs for LPAs to give positive consideration to producing joint Local Development Plans until such time no individual LPA was to be allowed to progress with their own plan. Council resolved to advise the Cabinet Secretary that given the urgent need for Bridgend to review its plan that it be allowed to do so unilaterally. The Cabinet Secretary has now responded and has allowed Bridgend to proceed with its review subject to strict deadlines.
- 3.2 The Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted by Bridgend County Borough Council on 18th September 2013 and sets out the Council's objectives for the development and use of land in Bridgend County Borough over the 15 year plan period 2006 to 2021, and its policies to implement them.
- 3.3 An up-to-date LDP is an essential part of a plan-led planning system in Wales. In order to ensure that there is a regular and comprehensive assessment of whether

plans remain up-to-date the Council is statutorily required under Section 69 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to undertake a full review of the adopted LDP at intervals not longer than every 4 years from the date of adoption. As such, a full review of the adopted LDP was triggered in September 2017.

- 3.4 In accordance with statutory requirements, since its adoption, the LDP has been monitored on an annual basis with the publication of 3 Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). The AMR assesses the extent to which the LDP's strategy, policies and allocations are being delivered and how effective it has been in delivering the plan's overall vision and objectives.
- 3.5 Any revision to an LDP must be preceded by a Review Report which is a statutory part of the full LDP Review process, forming part of the documentation required at the future Pre-Deposit and Deposit stages of a revised LDP and will be submitted for consideration as part of the Replacement LDP's Examination process.
- 3.6 The primary functions of a Review Report is to determine the appropriate procedural route and key issues to be considered when taking the existing LDP forward.
- 3.7 In terms of 'procedural route', in the case of Bridgend, the plan is already the subject to a statutory required 4 year full review, and as such all aspects of the plan will need to be assessed to consider if they remain sound and fit for purpose. This will include the LDP vision, objectives, spatial strategy, policies and land-use allocations, broadly following the same preparation process and stages as the original plan.
- 3.8 The Review Report also considers whether the process of producing a replacement LDP should be undertaken on an individual basis or jointly with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.
- 3.9 In terms of the role of the Review Report in identifying 'key issues' to be addressed in a replacement Plan, an integral part of this assessment are the findings of the preceding AMRs and consideration of the existing plans underlying evidence base (in terms of whether this needs to be replaced or updated). The Review Report also identifies other significant contextual changes in circumstances and policy context at a national, regional and local level, as these issues are also likely to inform and influence any potential changes and future direction of a Replacement Plan.

4. Current Situation

The main findings of the draft Review Report are as follows:-

4.1 Contextual Changes

The Replacement LDP will need to be updated to take account of a range of new Acts, Policy Frameworks, initiatives and evidence at a national, regional and local level.

The most significant in land-use terms in determining the future direction of the Replacement LDP will be evidence base changes associated with Welsh Government Population and Household projections, the work emanating from the National Development Framework (NDF) and regional work associated with the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, whilst ensuring that any changes and opportunities that this contextual evidence presents is compatible with the objectives of Bridgend's Wellbeing Plan.

4.2 Assessment of Likely Changes Required to the Current LDP

The Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy that underpins the LDP has been broadly successful, especially in bringing forward a number of residential and mixed-use allocated sites (primarily on brownfield land) within the County Borough. The delivery of sites has been especially successful within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway. The implementation of the LDP Strategy has however been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and Porthcawl. This has largely been attributed to land-ownership issues and assembly and viability issues especially within the upper areas of the Llynfi Valley.

In terms of going forward with the LDP's existing Strategy, given that the majority of existing brownfield regeneration sites have been delivered or are committed (and expected to come forward within the next few years especially within Bridgend and the Valley's Gateway Growth Areas), it is likely that the existing Strategy will need to be reconsidered if it is to deliver future housing requirements for the County Borough up to 2033, especially given that the housing land supply within the County Borough has fallen below the 5 year minimum requirement. The Review Report therefore recognises an urgent need to address a shortfall in the housing land supply by the identification of additional housing sites.

Notwithstanding the need to identify new housing sites to address an identified shortfall, many other policies are performing effectively and are likely to require only minor amendments to reflect contextual changes and updates to national policy.

4.3 Review of the Evidence Base

LDPs have to be based on robust evidence to ensure that critical land-use issues are identified and properly addressed. Some of the evidence base studies that underpin existing LDP policies are out-of-date and need to be updated and/or replaced in order to fully understand the land-use requirements of the County Borough up to 2033.

Some of the critical evidence base studies that will be required to support the Replacement plan are:-

- Population and household forecasts – to inform the LDP's dwelling requirement up to 2033.
- Local Housing Needs Assessment – to inform the housing requirement tenure type and size of dwelling to match future household type and age profile of the population.

- Employment Land Review Update – to assess the future need of employment land suitable for all employment sectors and regional employment aspirations.
- Retail Needs Assessment – to identify if there is a requirement for additional floorspace to help inform the Council’s approach to manage the vitality and viability of our town centres.
- Renewable Energy – evidence to support carbon reduction targets and mitigate the effect of climate change.

4.4 LDP Review Options

The Review Report makes the recommendation that the Council undertakes a full review of the existing LDP on an individual Local Planning Authority (LPA) area basis, wherever possible working collaboratively with other LPAs to produce a joint evidence base and with the region to prepare a SDP.

- 4.5 Stakeholders will make a valuable contribution in helping to identify and clarify what issues need to be considered, how effective the existing LDP has been in terms of delivery and the extent of likely changes required.
- 4.6 On this basis, it is proposed to undertake a ‘targeted’ consultation of the draft Review Report with key stakeholders. To assist in this process the draft Review Report is accompanied by a short questionnaire (see Appendix 2). It is proposed to undertake targeted consultation between 30th April 2018 and 25th May 2018.
- 4.7 Following consultation it is proposed to report the final Review Report back to Council for approval. The Consultation on the draft Review Report will take place alongside consultation on the draft Delivery Agreement (see separate item) and it is proposed to submit both documents to Welsh Government before the end of June 2018.

5. Effect Upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and regulation 41 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulation 2005 requires that a Local Planning Authority must commence a full review of its LDP every 4 years from the date of its initial adoption and that such a review must be preceded by a Review Report. The LDP Manual (2015) also advises that the review process should involve engagement with key stakeholders to assist in clarifying the issues to be considered in the review process.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report. However the policies contained within any Replacement LDP will require an equalities impact assessment to be carried out.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The cost of the LDP Review will be met from the Development Planning budget and carried out by development planning staff with expert advice and evidence procured

from consultants and through collaboration with neighbouring authorities as required. The financial implications and resources required to prepare a replacement LDP are set out in more detail in the separate draft Delivery Agreement.

8. Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015

8.1 The LDP Review of Replacement Plan will be prepared in accordance with the 7 Wellbeing goals and the 5 ways of working as identified in the Act.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That Council approve the draft Review Report for the purposes of targeted consultation.

9.2 That Council authorises the Group Manager Development, Communities Directorate to undertake consultation on the draft Review Report.

9.3 That Council give delegated authority to the Group Manager Development, Communities Directorate to make any factual corrections or minor amendments to the draft Review Report as considered necessary.

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Background documents: NA