

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 15 September 2016

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Title: Braintree District Council Local Plan
Preferred Options Document June 2016

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Barker

Key Decision: No

Summary

1. The Council needs to make comments on the Braintree Local Plan Preferred Options document which was out to public consultation until 19th August. Although this deadline has now past, officers have submitted a holding response (Appendix 1) which, if approved by Cabinet, will form Uttlesford's official comments. A report and comments have been considered by the PPWG of 23 August and subsequent amendments included regards caveats on the stage of UDC plan.

Recommendations

2. The Cabinet approves the comments on Braintree District Council Preferred Options document as set out in Appendix 1 of this report and summarised below;
 - It should be emphasised that UDC has yet to make any decision on its own preferred option regarding allocations or new settlements at this stage
 - Uttlesford District Council (UDC) continues to plan to meet its full Objectively Assessed Housing Need and so welcomes BDCs commitment to fully meet its own housing needs
 - Acknowledge that the joint strategic approach of the North Essex LPAs/North Essex Part One is helping in dealing with cross-boundary issues/positively planning the scale and distribution of growth
 - Acknowledge that garden cities are put forward as part of a wider housing allocation strategy needed for sustainable social and economic benefits
 - Acknowledge a proposed strategic location with the opportunity for a co-terminus new settlement between Uttlesford and Braintree Districts
 - UDC will continue to liaise closely with BDC regarding;
 - considering evidence
 - assessing reasonable growth options/impacts
 - planning for growth/assisting BDC positively plan its preferred option
 - a joint position with BDC regarding planned growth
 - UDC notes the opportunity regarding a Master plan framework, if applicable, to be prepared jointly between BDC and UDC
 - UDC welcomes the inclusion of proposed sustainable principles/mechanisms in the plan to support sustainable growth

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Ongoing
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	NA
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	Will be addressed in Local Plans
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

6. The Council needs to make comments on the Braintree Local Plan Preferred Options document to ensure that UDC's strategic planning objectives are reflected in BDC's Local Plan. It is also important that Duty to Co-operate legislation is complied with to enable both LPAs to plan positively to meet growth needs. There is a duty on LPAs to cooperate with its neighbouring authorities on strategic planning issues. The Document is the product of 18 months work by BDC/North Essex LPAs including liaison with UDC via senior-level officer meetings. These meetings will continue until BDC submit its plan in March 2017. However there is a need to understand a highly sophisticated approach to much bigger growth. Braintree Council began production of its Local plan in June 2014 consulting on a scoping exercise/leaflet January – March 2015 on the broad scope of the plan. The exercise did not include sufficient detail for UDC to make comment other than support Braintree's commitment to meet its identified housing needs. Braintree District Council is obliged to carry out a preferred options consultation because unlike Uttlesford they included no options for growth in their initial consultation. BDC expect to publish a finalised local plan for consultation in December 2016. The Preferred Options document is the emerging position expressed in broad terms. At this stage growth locations affecting UDC are shown diagrammatically as broad areas of search with details anticipated

before formal submission of the plan to the Secretary of State in March. It should be emphasised that UDC has yet to make any decision on its own preferred option for new settlements. Therefore nothing in this report may or should be construed in any way as inferring any decision on a preferred option.

Background to the Braintree Local Plan/strategic approach

7. The Braintree Local Plan is being prepared in the light of much higher growth needs from the North Essex housing market area since adopting its Core Strategy. Braintree has joined with Colchester Borough and Tendring District to address this scale of growth strategically. The LPAs have produced a shared strategy for North Essex as the centre piece of each Councils local plan. Called the North Essex Part One the joint strategy deals with;

- Homes & jobs
- Growth distribution
- Infrastructure
- Natural and built environment

8. The North Essex Part One proposes;

- Key Infrastructure priorities/improvements such as A12 and A120 widening
- Each North Essex LPA will meet its full objectively assessed housing need
- Clear strategy (Policy SP6) on providing sustainable growth making sustainable use of existing principal settlements/new garden communities
- Distribution/locations for garden communities derived from strategy/evidence base on growth alternatives and constraints
- Three large scale garden communities straddling LPA boundaries to sustainably meet growth needs that cannot be taken by towns/villages
- BDC have two of the garden communities taking the lion's share of Garden City delivery in North Essex
- A minimum net additional 14,365 homes for BDC 2016 to 2033 (845pa) to ensure a five year land supply/meet potential rises in its future housing need
- BDC Garden Communities account for 3650 of its 10,000 new homes
- One of the garden communities straddles the UDC boundary (West of Braintree) with 2,500 dwellings proposed in Braintree District
- Beyond 2033 the garden community may deliver more/over a much longer timeframe i.e. 30 years+ build up to 13,000 dwellings and associated jobs/facilities in BDC
- BDC Draft Policy SP10 West of Braintree identifies a broad area of search/strategic area for a garden city with details/final number of homes to be set out in a Master plan framework, if applicable to be prepared jointly between BDC and UDC
- The North Essex Concept Feasibility Study provides supporting evidence to the garden communities including constraints/opportunities and options
- The above Study identifies broad opportunities/constraints for two options West of Braintree i.e. BDC land and UDC land
- On landscaping notes opportunities to use existing assets such as Boxted Wood to create a network of Green Infrastructure/need to examine impacts in more detail

- On transport Galleys corner identified as hotspot although by end of plan period most junctions in Braintree at capacity/need to test impact on M11 J8
- Transport major issue in BDC with considerable mitigation needed on almost every major junction in/around Braintree
- BDC will need to identify detailed transport impacts/measures for West of Braintree impacting UDC with opportunities for involvement

9 UDCs' comments on the above are contained in a holding response sent to BDC contained in Appendix 1. Following this Cabinet meeting of 15 September a final response will be sent.

10 The Braintree District Council Preferred Options Plan is available via the links below;

https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200230/planning_policy/701/new_local_plan/2

https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/file/5775/1_policies_and_text

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If the Council does not make comment then will lose influence over the plan/not meet DTC requirements.	Low	Delays in adopting the UDC Local Plan.	Make comments on BDC plan and ongoing DTC work.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.