

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 7

meeting date: THURSDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017
title: BOLTON BY BOWLAND AND GISBURN FOREST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN -
UPDATE
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: COLIN HIRST – HEAD OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To receive an update on Bolton by Bowland and Gisburn Forest Neighbourhood Plan.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – The matters covered in this report will contribute to several of the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy including appropriate housing and encouraging economic activity.
- Corporate Priorities – The document that is the subject of this report relates to Council ambitions of making people's lives safer and healthier and also helping to protect the environment by directing future development into appropriate and sustainable locations.
- Other Considerations – This consultation response will help the Council to positively contribute to the neighbourhood planning process.

2. INFORMATION

2.1 Neighbourhood planning is an initiative which gives local communities the opportunity, should they choose to take it, to develop a formal plan for their particular area. This plan, once adopted, will have legal force in the formal planning system alongside other documents produced by the Planning Authority and by central government. It must be in general conformity with the area's overall Local Plan, including the Core Strategy, and not conflict with central government policy statements such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and, once it is formally adopted, the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations.

2.2 In general terms, and subject to the above, neighbourhood plans give local communities the ability to develop a shared vision for their particular area including where they want to see new homes, shops and work places develop, potentially what those new buildings will look like and what infrastructure should be provided. These plans can operate over ten, fifteen or twenty year horizons. It is also important to note that the plan is also subject to the parallel process of Sustainability Appraisal, as was the Core Strategy.

2.3 Briefly, the process of developing a neighbourhood plan begins with the designation of the specific area the plan will consider. In this case it is the combined parishes of Bolton by Bowland and Gisburn Forest, which have developed the draft to which this consultation refers through a joint Steering Group under the guidance of independent consultants. The neighbourhood plan is the first of its type to be progressed to this stage in the Ribble Valley.

- 2.4 The draft plan was the subject of public engagement and consultation in accord with the applicable regulations. It was published for consultation between 5 January 2015 and the 1 March 2015. This Council made a detailed response to the Plan which was considered by this Committee at its meeting of 12 February 2015. Minute 597 refers.
- 2.5 The Parish Council submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to Ribble Valley Borough Council in November 2016. The Council subsequently published the Neighbourhood Plan for 6 weeks statutory consultation, following which an Independent Examiner was appointed to examine the submitted plan. This matter was considered by this Committee at its meeting held on 15 December 2016, Minute 424 refers.
- 2.6 The Examination has been completed and the Examiner's report received by the Council and this has been published on the Council's website. Under the Regulations the Council has to take a decision on the Examiner's report within 5 weeks of receipt unless the Parish Council as qualifying body agree to a different timeframe. The Parish Council wishes to hold an Extra Ordinary Parish Meeting to discuss the findings of the Examination and with this in mind order to facilitate the Committee timetable, agreement has been made to report the Examiner's report and the Council's response to the November Planning and Development Committee.
- 2.7 This will enable the Parish Council's consideration of the Examiner's report to be considered by Planning and Development Committee to inform their decision. At this stage there is still the opportunity for the Parish Council to decide to withdraw their plan but this can only be done before the Borough Council makes a decision on the outcome of the Examination and the Examiner's recommendations. Whilst the Examiner has recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan can pass to the Referendum stage, he has made a number of suggested modifications to allow it to progress. It is these proposals that the Parish Council wish to consider in detail and it is held to be an appropriate course of action for Ribble Valley to enable them to hold their Extra Ordinary Meeting ahead of any further deliberation and decisions by this Committee.
- 2.8 As indicated I anticipate a report being presented to this Committee at its November 2017 meeting when a fully informed decision can be taken. Further details regarding Neighbourhood Planning can be found on the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) website link below.

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/>

COLIN HIRST
HEAD OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Neighbourhood Plan files and previous reports.
2. Examiner's report into the Bolton by Bowland and Gisburn Forest Neighbourhood Plan.

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