

**TO: THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL / EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COUNCIL  
STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY COHESION  
11 DECEMBER 2019**

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**CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON THE  
REVISED BRACKNELL TOWN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**Director of Place, Planning and Regeneration**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Leader to agree the Council's response to the focused consultation on the revised Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan (see Section 5 of this report for background).

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **That the Leader agrees:**

**The Council's response to the focused consultation on the Revised Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan as set out in Appendix 1 for submission to the Examiner.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The reason for this recommendation is that the Council, as a respondent to the previous Regulation 16 consultation, has been invited by the Examiner of the Plan to make a response on the revised Plan.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The alternative option is for the Council not to respond to the focused consultation. This is not recommended, as it is an opportunity for the Council to comment on the revised Plan.

**5 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Bracknell Town Council is the Qualifying Body for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning in Bracknell Town. The Council designated Bracknell Town as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning on 11 February 2014.
- 5.2 Bracknell Town Council has undertaken much work on preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, resulting in the Submission of the Plan to the Council on 28 November 2018. At the Executive meeting of 18 December 2018, it was agreed that the Council would undertake public consultation on the Submission version of the Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan pursuant to Regulation 16. It was also resolved to appoint an independent Examiner to undertake the examination of the Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3 Consultation on the Submission version (Regulation 16) subsequently took place between 7 January and 18 February 2019, and an independent Examiner was appointed. The Leader (decision of 7 February 2019) also agreed the Council's response to the Regulation 16 consultation, and to submit the Plan for examination.

- 5.4 Following the submission of the Plan for Examination, an independent Examiner held a hearing session on the Plan in May 2019, and issued Interim Conclusions in June 2019. This set out three options for Bracknell Town Council in terms of progressing the Plan:
- 1) reconfigure the documentation to address Examiner's concerns;
  - 2) not take up the two-stage approach, and Examiner proceed to final report; or
  - 3) withdraw the Plan.
- 5.5 The Town Council opted for Option 1, a revised version of the Plan, and schedule of changes was subsequently submitted in October 2019.
- 5.6 Following receipt of the revised Plan, the Examiner issued a note ('Further Comments' dated 1 November) setting out that a focused 28 day consultation for those who responded to the Regulation 16 consultation should take place.
- 5.7 The Examiner is specifically only inviting comments on the revised document in terms of its structure and form, and whether there are matters that have been deleted from the original version of the plan, but should be included within the neighbourhood plan. The Examiner has also asked that comments should not relate to the proposed policies, which have not changed and which have already been the subject of the Regulation 16 consultation.
- 5.8 As one of the respondents to the Regulation 16 consultation, Bracknell Forest Council has been invited to make comments on the revised Plan (in line with the Examiner's comments as set out above). The focused consultation will take place between 10am Monday 18 November until 5pm on Monday 16 December 2019.

## **6 BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL'S RESPONSE**

- 6.1 The Council's response is focused on the structure and form of the document, and relates to the following matters (see Appendix 1 of this report for full response):
- Format and structure of the document: a number of points previously raised have still not been addressed, for example lack of a numbered contents page, no consecutive numbering of pages and maps/illustrations within the document, no paragraph numbering.
  - Background information: Much of the previous introductory background information to each chapter, which sometimes included matters that are national and strategic in nature, now appear to have been removed, which results in the sections of the plan being more focused and succinct.
  - Evidence: It now appears that reference to other authorities' documents within the Plan has been addressed.
  - Maps and illustrations: The quality of the maps in the printed copy of the 'Interim Report Version' of the Plan is clearer than the 'Submission Version'. However, due to the scale of some maps, they provide insufficient clarity over the precise spatial extent/location to which Policies apply. There does not appear to be an overarching/composite Policies Map, which was discussed at the Hearing.

### Next Stages

- 6.2 Following the close of the focused consultation on the revised Plan, the Council will send any comments received (including the Council's response) to the Examiner, who will then continue with the Examination of the Plan.

### Resource Implications

- 6.3 Resource implications relating to the examination/referendum process are set out in the previous report to Leader of 7 February 2019.

## **7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 Due to the focused nature of the consultation on the revised Plan (relating to the format and structure of the Plan, rather than Policies) there are no legal issues in terms of running the focused consultation, and obtaining a decision on the Council's response during the current purdah period relating to the forthcoming General Election. The recommendation of the report seeks the Leader's approval of the Council's formal response on the revised Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan focused consultation (detailed comments are as set out in Appendix 1).
- 7.2 Governance arrangements and implications relating to the examination process are set out in the previous report to Leader of 7 February 2019.

### Borough Treasurer

- 7.3 There are no financial implications of the focused consultation. There are financial implications relating to the examination/referendum process, which are set out in the previous report to Leader of 7 February 2019.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.4 It is not considered relevant at this stage, as the policies do not prejudice any particular section of the community and the Council has not prepared the policies.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Focused consultation on the revised Plan is running between 18 November and 16 December 2019, in line with the Examiner's Further Comments (November 2019). Those who responded to the previous Regulation 16 stage have been invited to submit comments.
- 8.2 As the focus of the consultation relates to the format and structure of the Plan, and not proposed Policies, it has not been necessary to undertake internal consultation.

### Background Papers

- The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017
- Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Area Designation:  
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/bracknell-town-neighbourhood-area>
- 18 December 2018 Executive Report (item 45):  
<https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=102&MId=7867>
- 7 February 2019 Leader Report:  
<https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=2899>

- Council's Response to Regulation 16 Consultation (15 February 2019):  
<http://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/5291959>
- Examiner's Interim Conclusions following Public Hearing (June 2019):  
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/bracknell-neighbourhood-plan-interim-conclusions-june-2019.pdf>
- Examiners Further Comments (November 2019):  
<http://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/5526653>
- Current Focused consultation material:  
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/bracknell-town-neighbourhood-area>

#### Appendices

1 – Bracknell Forest Council's response to the Focused Consultation on the Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan

#### Contact for further information

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