

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Planning, Housing and Economic Development Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2015</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		<b>E2787</b>
TITLE:	<b>Placemaking Plan</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> None		

### **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The B&NES Placemaking Plan is due to be considered by Cabinet in November 2015 for public consultation and submission for independent examination. The Placemaking Plan is a key corporate document setting out the Council's position on the development sites and planning other planning policies across the district. The Scrutiny Panel will have the opportunity to comment on the Plan as part of the consultation and this report sets out the key issues to be included.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Panel notes the scope and purpose of the Placemaking Plan and the opportunity to make detailed comments on the contents of the Plan as part of the formal consultation process.

### **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 The Plan has to date been prepared within the resources of the existing Local Development Framework budget. However, the costs associated with additional evidence collection and community engagement (para 5.5 below) will be in excess of existing budgets and requires resolution.
- 3.2 Its planning framework will have financial implications for the development of sites and the use of land within B&NES.
- 3.3 The Plan also reflects the outputs of other expenditure in the district such as the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area Masterplan and the Transport Strategies.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Once adopted the Plan will be a formal planning document (a Development Plan Document) with full weight in planning decisions and appeals. Under s.38 (6) of the Planning Act decisions must be in accordance with the adopted Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The preparation of the Plan is subject to formal procedures, including consultation arrangements, sustainability appraisal and examination. As part of the latter, the Plan will be assessed for 'soundness'. This means the Plan must be:
- Positively prepared: deliver growth and change;
  - Justified: the most appropriate strategy in light of the reasonable alternatives and based on evidence;
  - Effective: deliverable
  - Consistent with national policy: the NPPF
- 4.3 Any proposals that the Council wishes to pursue must be set out in the Development Plan as other documents do not carry the same weight.

## **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Core Strategy sets out the strategic policy for the District and the Placemaking Plan complements this with more detailed planning proposals and policies. The scope of the Plan is to:
- Allocate development sites and sets development principles
  - Protect important assets eg Local Greenspace
  - Highlight infrastructure requirements needed to support development
  - Review Housing Development Boundaries
  - Provide up-to-date district wide planning policies
- 5.2 The Plan will be in 5 sections: Bath; Keynsham; Somer Valley; Rural Areas and the district-wide policies. The key issues for each section are set out below.
- Bath**
- 5.3 There are significant demands for the use of prime sites in the City, such as for office, retail, hotels, residential and student accommodation. However, the relatively small size of the City, the limited number of available sites and the need to take into account the special characteristics of the City mean that these uses are in competition for space. It is the role of the Placemaking Plan to set the priorities in light of the Council's corporate aspirations. The forthcoming examination will assess whether the Council has chosen the appropriate strategy in light of the reasonable alternatives.
- 5.4 It is also important that the development proposed is properly aligned with the necessary Infrastructure. To enable this, the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been updated and the draft Plan reflects the Bath Transport Strategy. It is essential to ensure that the Plan demonstrates that there is a strategy to enable the appropriate infrastructure to be in place when needed, especially transport infrastructure. The Council's preferred option for the East of Bath Park & Ride will need to be reflected in the Placemaking Pan as an allocation.

## **Keynsham**

5.5 The Placemaking Plan includes a Masterplan for Keynsham based on the Core Strategy. There are a number of key issues which need to be resolved before the Plan is finalised. A further engagement event is due to be held in Keynsham on 15<sup>th</sup> September to cover these and other related projects:

- Transport Strategy
- Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
- Location of the new Leisure Centre
- Air Quality Management Plan
- Layout of the East of Keynsham employment allocation

## **Somer Valley**

5.6 Both Midsomer Norton and Westfield are preparing Neighbourhood Plans and so the Placemaking Plan will need to be closely co-ordinated with the preparation of these. The Midsomer Norton Neighbourhood Plan will make the key development site allocations such as for retail development and establish the principles for the redevelopment of sites such as the disused Welton Packaging Factory site.

5.7 The Placemaking Plan will review the Housing Development Boundary, make Local Green Space designations and designate those existing employment areas to be protected from loss to other uses as well as designate new employment sites.

5.8 In Radstock, the Placemaking Plan will need to clarify the direction for the town centre and set out proposals for the key development sites.

## **Rural Areas**

5.9 B&NES has been working closely with Parish Councils to support the preparation of neighbourhood plans. Together B&NES and the local communities will identify any necessary housing sites, review Housing Development Boundaries and make Local Green Space designations.

## **District–Wide Policies**

5.10 The Placemaking Plan will also need to include a suite of district-wide policies covering issues such as:

- Housing standards and design
- Green Infrastructure
- Lighting
- Energy Minerals (Fracking)
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
- Renewable energy

## 6 RATIONALE

6.1 It is necessary to ensure that the District benefits from a robust, clear and up-to-date planning strategy. This is provided by the Placemaking Plan together with the Core Strategy.

## 7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 The preparation of the Plan has entailed consideration of a range of alternative development options to help establish the most appropriate strategy. These have been documented in the Issues and Options Consultation document. The Plan has also undergone sustainability appraisals at key stages to ensure that the Council's spatial strategy is sustainable.

## 8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Preparation of the Plan has undergone significant consultation in line with the Council's Neighbourhood Planning protocol and the Planning Regulations. Consultation responses are treated formally as evidence. The draft Placemaking Plan is due to be considered by Cabinet in November 2015 for publication and submission for examination. The draft Plan is scheduled to be considered by the Scrutiny Panel once the Plan is published for consultation.

8.2 Whilst the comments received will be primarily for the Inspector's consideration at the examination, the Council can make changes to the Plan in response to key issues arising from the consultation. A statement of consultation will be published alongside the draft Plan.

8.3 The West of England Joint Spatial Plan is also due for consultation in the autumn and the consultation arrangements will need to limit any confusion between the two plans as far as possible.

8.4 The Council's Monitoring Officer has the opportunity to input to this report and has cleared it for publication.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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<b>Background papers</b>	<i>Placemaking Plan Options consultation document 2014 B&amp;NES Adopted Core Strategy 2014</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	