

# Cabinet

11 June 2024

## Bournemouth Christchurch Poole Council Local Plan consultation response

### For Decision

#### Cabinet Member and Portfolio

Cllr S Bartlett, Planning and Emergency Planning

**Local Councillor(s):** All

#### Executive Director:

Jan Britton, Executive Lead for Place

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**Report Status:** Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

#### **Brief Summary:**

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council) are at an advanced stage of producing their Local Plan. A publication consultation version (Regulation 19) has been produced ahead of the draft plan being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in public. This plan is what BCP Council to be a legally compliant and sound local plan for their area. Consultation on this draft plan ran between 20 March and 3 May 2024.

The response in Appendix 1 of this report has been prepared in response to the regulation 19 consultation on the BCP Council Local Plan. The response has been submitted to BCP Council as an officer response with the opportunity now for Dorset Council Cabinet to endorse the response.

In addition, consultation on the BCP Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule ran between 25 April and 6 June. An officer response has been submitted to this consultation and is include as Appendix 3 to this report.

Should amendments to the submitted consultation responses be considered necessary, these can be submitted to BCP Council however the official consultation periods have now closed.

## **Recommendation:**

That Cabinet endorse the submitted officer responses made to the recent consultations as the official view of Dorset Council:

- a. the BCP Council Local Plan consultation in Appendix 1.
- b. the BCP Council Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule consultation in Appendix 3.

## **Reason for Recommendation:**

It is important that Dorset Council engages with BCP Council to help shape their Local Plan and to ensure that any cross-boundary effects are identified and managed through joint working. This engagement, alongside the continued engagement that has taken place during the production of the Local Plan, ensures that the Council's obligations under the Duty to Cooperate are fulfilled.

### **1. Report**

- 1.1 Every Local Planning Authority in England is required to produce a Local Plan. The local plan is used as the basis for making decisions on planning applications within the authority area. During the preparation of a local plan, there is a legal requirement to engage with neighbouring local planning authorities on strategic cross-boundary issues as part of the duty to cooperate. It is therefore important that Dorset Council engage and work with neighbouring local authorities during the preparation of their local plans and in the preparation of Dorset Council Local Plan.
- 1.2 Officers from BCP Council and Dorset Council have met regularly during the production of the BCP Council Local Plan. In addition to this ongoing engagement, there are formal opportunities for Dorset Council to comment on the BCP Council Local Plan at the point that consultation takes place. A response was made to consultation in March 2022 (see Appendix 2) and this recent consultation was the final opportunity prior to the plan being submitted for examination in public.
- 1.3 An officer response was submitted to the consultation before it closed on 3 May (see Appendix 1). Should amendments be made to this officer response, BCP Council will have discretion as to whether they accept the amended response.
- 1.4 The BCP Council Local Plan will cover the period from 2024 to 2039 and proposes to meet a housing requirement of 1,600 homes over the plan period (1,200 per year to 2028/29 and then 1,800 for the remainder of the plan period), This delivery rate is below the Local Housing Need figure calculated

using the Standard Method but this is because of the specific characteristics of population growth in the BCP area<sup>1</sup>.

- 1.5 Under the duty to cooperate, neighbouring councils are required to maintain effective cooperation on strategic issues that cross local authority boundaries. When establishing the number of new homes needed, the unmet need in a neighbouring local authority area should be considered. If BCP Council are found to not be effectively meeting their housing need, as derived through the Standard Method, then Dorset Council will need to consider whether it would be appropriate to meet some or all of this unmet need. The response submitted to the consultation supports the use of a lower housing requirement for the BCP Council Local Plan but also raises concerns about the deliverability of the strategy for delivering housing. The suggestion is that BCP Council need to demonstrate that they have thoroughly examined all opportunities for meeting their housing need before Dorset Council will consider whether there are opportunities for any unmet need to be met within Dorset.
- 1.6 The strategy for accommodating the housing that is needed in BCP focuses primarily on the intensification of the urban area. Approximately 90% of the housing growth is proposed to be delivered within the existing built-up area with the remaining 10% being delivered on existing urban extension sites. The plan does not propose any additional release of Green Belt land.
- 1.7 Although the submitted response supports the approach of intensification within the urban area, there is concern as to whether the strategy will meet the housing needs of the area and specifically whether it will meet the needs of families and those needing affordable homes. Intensification of an existing built-up urban area tends to deliver a higher proportion of flats than on greenfield sites and these urban sites are often more complicated and costly to deliver. The implication of this strategy could be a displacement of the need for family homes and for affordable homes to the Dorset Council area. This could result in increased commuting and increased pressure on existing infrastructure within the Dorset Council area.
- 1.8 The response supports the efforts in the plan to encourage low carbon and active/non-car travel but also raises a number of concerns about some of the specific transport infrastructure proposals that may impact directly upon the Dorset Council area. Establishing cross-boundary active travel infrastructure connections are supported.

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<sup>1</sup> A jointly produced report examined the inputs of the Standard Method for calculating a local plan housing requirement for BCP Council and Dorset Council [907d0399-0cf7-36a2-4920-a268c4e93e0f](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/907d0399-0cf7-36a2-4920-a268c4e93e0f) ([dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk))

- 1.9 The consultation response includes support for the allocation of a site to help meet the need for gypsies and travellers and supports the delivery of the Stour Valley Park as a strategic piece of green infrastructure that will serve both the residents of BCP Council and Dorset Council areas.
- 1.10 Several supporting documents will sit alongside the BCP Council Local Plan, one of which is a new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule that will replace the three existing area-based schedules covering the BCP Council area. Charging schedules form an important tool in the delivery of infrastructure needed to support development. The proposed charging schedule has relevance to Dorset Council due to shared responsibilities with the delivery of habitat mitigation. Consultation on the BCP Council CIL charging schedule took place between 25 April and 6 June. A short officer response included as Appendix 3 to this report, supporting the principle of a revised charging schedule, was submitted within the consultation timeframe.

## 2. **Financial Implications**

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising from the consideration of this response to the BCP Council Local Plan consultation as an officer report has already been submitted. However, officers may need to prepare for and attend the examination of the BCP Local Plan to state the Council's position. The costs associated with this will be met from within existing budgets.

## 3. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

- 3.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development includes an environmental, social and economic objectives with the balancing of these being the role of the planning system. As such, the proposals within the BCP Local Plan will have considered the implications for the Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology and the Plan contains objectives focused on tackling these issues.

## 4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

- 4.1 Local Plans, such as the BCP Local Plan, are required by national planning policy to aim to deliver healthy, inclusive and safe places.

## 5. **Other Implications**

- 5.1 The content of a local plan is wide ranging however there are not considered any significant implications that warrant a detailed response other than those identified in this report.

## 6. **Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

## 7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 This report proposes a response to the BCP Council Local Plan. As part of the preparation of their Local Plan, BCP Council would have considered equalities issues and will have prepared an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## 8. **Appendices**

**Appendix 1:** Officer response to the BCP Council Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation submitted on 1 May 2024.

**Appendix 2:** Response submitted in March 2022 to the earlier Regulation 18 consultation on the BCP Council Local Plan.

## 9. **Background Papers**

- 9.1 The detail of the BCP Council Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy including the consultation material relevant to this report can be found at the link below.

[BCP Local Plan | BCP \(bcpcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

[Community Infrastructure Levy | BCP \(bcpcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

## 10. **Report Sign Off**

- 10.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s).