

Council Meeting – 20 March 2024

Item 10 – Oral Report of the Cabinet held on 19 March 2024 – Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-38 Adoption

The following information was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting.

PIED PAC resolution:

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the CABINET:

1. That the Council be recommended to adopt the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review (2021-2038) at Appendix D *to the report of the Cabinet of 19 March 2024*, which incorporates the Inspector's Main Modifications, and the Policies Map at Appendix E *to the report of the Cabinet of 19 March 2024*.
2. That the Council be recommended to give delegated authority to the Head of Spatial Planning & Economic Development to make any non-material, typographical corrections, and formatting changes, as required.

Points raised by the PIED PAC:

- Local Plan Review (LPR) produced with cross-party consensus and significant Member engagement;
- LPR is a comprehensive document, supported by multiple appraisals and assessments (see appendices), multiple stages of public consultation and examinations having been held;
- The Planning Inspector had reviewed the LPR and found it to be a sound document, supported by his Main Modifications (Appendix A to the report);
- Members highlighted that the LPR would not please everybody, but that it was important to have an agreed Local Plan to guide and support sustainable development across the borough, in accordance with the Council's policy. The Council had to provide Housing in accordance with the figures provided by Central Government;
- Without an agreed LP, the Council would have less control over the location and type of development coming forward. This would also mean less power should developers appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a Council decision;
- Some Members expressed opposition to the LPR as proposed, particularly in relation to the Lidsing Garden Community proposal generally and its reliance on public transport';

In response, confirmation was given that:

- The Council had met its Duty to Co-operate with Medway Council in relation to the Lidsing Garden Community proposal;
- The final decision on the LPRs adoption would be made by the Council;
- Without an agreed plan, the Council would need to apply the National Planning Policy Framework definition of sustainable development when considering planning applications, rather than the detailed local requirements set out in the Local Plan Review;
- If the LPR was not agreed, the Council's 5-year Housing Land Supply would not be met and the Council's evidence base to support its housing numbers would expire after 30 March 2024. This would give the Council less control over development;
- If the Local Plan Review is adopted then Supplementary Planning Documents would be produced for the Heathlands, Lidsing and Invicta Barracks proposals, which provide more detailed requirements for development.
- The requirements relating to transport have been reviewed with further requirements added by the Planning Inspector through Main Modifications.