

Maidstone Borough Council

Planning, Transport & Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 17 September 2013

Five Year Housing Land Supply: Methodology and Judgements.

Report of: Orla Sweeney, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On Monday 2 September 2013 an extraordinary meeting of the Maidstone Borough Council was held to consider a motion.
- 1.2 As a result of this meeting Maidstone Borough Council made a detailed 3 part instruction. The full instruction is detailed at 3.1 of this report. Part 1 and Part 2 of this instruction are to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:
 1. Elected members are provided with the opportunity to both scrutinise the methodology and judgements that need to be made in calculating the five year housing land supply through Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 2. The issues to be considered at a single item agenda of the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th September and Overview and Scrutiny Committee should report its findings to Full Council as soon as practicable and in any case should report the position it has reached to the Full Council scheduled for 18th September 2013.
- 1.3 The Chairman felt it appropriate to receive a presentation on the five Year housing land supply in order to allow elected members the opportunity to both scrutinise the methodology and judgements the need to be made in calculating the five year housing land supply.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee are advised to receive a presentation on the methodology and judgements that need to be made in calculating the five year housing land supply

2.2 Following this meeting the Committee “should report its findings to Full Council as soon as practicable and in any case should report the position it has reached to the Full Council scheduled for 18th September 2013.”

2.3 In respect of this agenda item, the Committee should note the following Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule:

“20. Procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings

(b) Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee conducts investigations (e.g. with a view to policy development) the Committee may also ask people to attend to give evidence at Committee meetings which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- i. That the investigation be conducted fairly and all members of the Committee be given opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak;
- ii. That those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- iii. That the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.”

(pg, 149, Maidstone Borough council Constitution, 8 August 2013).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 At Full Council on 2 September the following instruction was made:

“The issues of housing targets and how they are to be achieved in the short and long term futures are complex and of significant public interest.

It is therefore imperative that all the key stakeholders in particular elected members, the Maidstone community and the house building industry have confidence in the council’s housing policies, assessment of need and supply, and monitoring arrangements. To confirm and make transparent the soundness of the advice given by officers to Cabinet and Planning Committee under the terms of the NPPF relating to the construction of the five year land supply we propose that:

1. Elected members are provided with the opportunity to both scrutinise the methodology and judgements that need to be made in calculating the five year housing land supply through Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. The issues to be considered at a single item agenda of the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th September and Overview and Scrutiny Committee should report its findings to Full Council as soon as practicable and in any case should report the position it has reached to the Full Council scheduled for 18th September 2013.
3. In the meantime that officers should continue to keep the Five Year Housing Land Supply under regular review in line with the requirements of the NPPF advising the Cabinet member for Planning, Transport and Development of any incremental changes and reporting to Cabinet when there is a need to consider significant changes in the housing target or land supply.”

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 4.1 The Committee will primarily consider reports that deliver against all the Council priority: ‘For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.’
- 4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council’s key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council’s priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Committee will consider throughout the coming year.