

**MEETING OUR OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED NEED FOR HOUSING
MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION – SUPPORTING THE SPATIAL
APPROACH 2011-2031
(Report by the Assistant Director, Environment, Growth and Planning)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet about the joint working that has taken place, within our housing market areas, in order to enable us to appropriately assess our future housing needs.
- 1.2 This work is vital in order to ensure that we can effectively plan to meet our future additional housing needs. It also allows the Cambridgeshire, and other partner, Authorities to demonstrate that we have effectively complied with the Duty to Co-operate, as set out in the Localism Act 2011, in respect of this fundamental strategic planning issue.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) in Paragraph 159 specifically requires that “Local Planning Authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.”
- 2.2 Therefore the Council, acting in respect of its role as the Local Planning Authority, has, subsequent to the withdrawal of the Regional Spatial Strategy and its inherent housing targets, to reasonably look to define its own future strategic housing targets. This robust piece of evidence based assessment work allows us to continue to undertake that task with an appropriate degree of confidence.
- 2.3 It is important to note that if we were not able to demonstrate that we were appropriately planning to meet our reasonably assessed housing needs the presumption in favour of sustainable development (as set out in NPPF Paragraph 14) would more readily apply - and that would potentially leave us open to speculative housing proposals. It has also become apparent that a number of recently submitted Local Plans have been found unsound on the basis that compliance with their duty in respect of this issue has not been demonstrated.

3. THE MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION

- 3.1 Effective joint working has been taking place with all the planning authorities within our strategic housing areas, under the auspice of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit, to ensure that we can fully comply with the requirements of the NPPF.
- 3.2 That joint working has now produced a position whereby all the planning authorities within the Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Market Area,

working in collaboration with Peterborough, have been able to agree appropriate future targets for meeting our strategic housing needs.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The Council, acting in respect of its role as the Local Planning Authority, in order to accord with the requirements of the NPPF, now has to appropriately determine its own future housing targets. This robust piece of evidence based work allows us to do that.
- 4.2 The attached Joint Strategic Planning Unit report and the related Memorandum of Co-operation outlines the conclusions of the applicable evidence based assessments. This effective shared approach is likely to be considered to be national best practice.
- 4.3 It is important to note that the housing need assumptions which underpin the future growth proposals contained within our emerging Local Plan are in accordance with the Memorandum of Co-operation.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Therefore it is recommended that the Cabinet;
 - a. Notes the effective joint working that has taken place, and
 - b. Endorses the Memorandum of Co-operation.

Background Papers:

Localism Act 2011 – Duty to Co-operate - Local Planning Authorities
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

Memorandum of Co-operation – Supporting the Spatial Approach 2011-2031 – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit 2013
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CMSWebsite/Apps/Committees/AgendaItem.aspx?agendaItemID=6847>

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