

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide YES		
		Need to be recommendations to Council NO		
		Is it a Key Decision YES		
Lead Member: Cllr Richard Blunt E-mail: richard.blunt@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Richard Blunt		
		Other Members consulted: Local Plan Task Group		
Lead Officer: Alan Gomm E-mail: alan.gomm@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616237		Other Officers consulted: Management Team		
Financial Implications Yes	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre-screening/	Risk Management Implications Yes

Date of meeting: 24 September 2019

HOUSING DELIVERY TEST ACTION PLAN

Summary

Government changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) have introduced the Housing Delivery Test (HDT). This is a new test for Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to navigate. The test measures the number of homes actually delivered against how many homes should have been delivered over the past three year period. Results are expressed as a percentage and this dictates the measures required for the LPA to take or the penalties it faces. The Borough Council's result for 2018 is 91%. This means that a HDT Action Plan needs to be prepared. The Action Plan explores housing supply and delivery in some detail and then provides a series of Actions for the Borough Council to consider going forward in an attempt to increase housing supply and delivery.

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to endorse the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Borough Council complies with its duties as set out within

the NPPF and PPG. The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan sets out a series of appropriate actions for the Borough Council to consider and explore in the short, medium and long term in an attempt to increase housing supply and delivery.

Background

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Government, through changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), have introduced a new test for Local Planning Authorities (LPA's). This is a part of a range of measures the Government has introduced to enable them to attempt to achieve their ambition for 300,000 new homes to be built every year in England by the mid 2020's. This new test is called the Housing Delivery Test (HDT).
- 1.2 The HDT does exactly what the title infers; it is a measure of how many new homes have been delivered within the LPA's area over the past three years against how many new homes should have been delivered. The results of the HDT are anticipated to be published in November each year by Government (although it should be noted the 2018 results were actually published in February 2019). The result is expressed as a percentage.
- 1.3 The result dictates the actions or measures the LPA is either required to undertake or the penalties it faces, for 2018 this is as follows:
 - 95% = A pass
 - Below 95% = An Action Plan needs to be prepared
 - Below 85% = The above and a 20% land buffer in the LPA's five year housing land supply calculation
 - Below 25% = The above and the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged
- 1.4 The results are fixed until the subsequent years' results are published. Moving forward the 'presumption' % rises to 45% for 2019 and 75% for 2020 onwards.
- 1.5 The Borough Council's HDT result for 2018 is 91%. So there is a requirement for the borough council to prepare a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. An Action Plan needs to be prepared within 6 months of the publication of the results.

2. Borough Council Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

2.1 In line with the requirements an Action Plan has been developed. This explores the following (summarised):

- National and local contexts
- Current five year housing land supply position
- Past housing delivery and the borough council's HDT result
- The many proactive measure the borough council is taking to ensure new homes are delivered
- Detailed analysis of the latest housing trajectory schedule and other data sources to identify housing supply/delivery strengths and weaknesses

2.2 Based upon the above the Action Plan sets out a series of appropriate actions for the borough council to consider in an attempt to increase both the supply and delivery of new homes.

2.3 The HDT Action Plan and supporting evidence documents can be viewed in full via the web-link below:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20079/planning_policy_and_local_plan/753/housing_delivery_test_hdt_action_plan

2.4 For convenience the Actions are replicated below:

Ongoing:

- Build out of Borough Council sites which are allocated, have planning permission or funding
- Continue to proactively work towards bringing forward the West Winch Growth Area
- Implement the Actions set out in the Borough Council Custom and Self-Build Action Plan, including providing opportunities for and raising awareness of this method of delivery
- Consider reducing the time given to planning permissions in light of the Housing Delivery Test result and future five year housing land supply positions
- Take decisions according to Local Plan and NPPF to provide clarity, certainty and consistency
- Continue to provide support for those communities wishing to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their area and if appropriate support neighbourhood plan allocations
- Member Training
- Proactively monitor permissions and completions

Short term (1-2 Years):

- Local Plan review. Prepare this in a timely fashion and provide the opportunity for a balanced portfolio of sites in terms of size, location and Greenfield / brownfield.
- Produce a new Strategic Housing Marketing Assessment (SHMA)
- Produce a new whole Local Plan viability study
- Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework - continue to support this and the strategic housing delivery study
- Local Plan Task Group to consider sites which appear to have stalled (rated red)
- Borough Council to consider another phase of Rural Exception Sites (affordable housing)
- Borough Council to carry out its functions with regard to its established housing company and seek to provide further housing within the Borough
- Borough Council to carry out its functions as a Registered Provider and consider directly provide affordable housing
- Review the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Medium term (2-5 years):

- Borough Council to consider delivering more homes – both on own land and consider other options
- Work across the County with other authorities, as part of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework and through any follow up work that arises from the NSPF Housing Delivery Study

Long term (5 years +):

- Once the Local Plan review has been adopted commence work on a new Local Plan

3. Options Considered

- 3.1 The Council could decide not to comply with the NPPF and PPG. However, this would make examination of the Local Plan, any challenges to housing delivery, and any challenges to the five year housing land supply position very difficult. Therefore it isn't really an option not to prepare one. The test is new; the thresholds are high and the penalties (higher land supply target & the possibility of the Local Plan policies relating to housing supply carrying less/limited weight in the decision making process as the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is engaged.) severe.

4. Policy Implications

- 4.1 As stated above there is a requirement to comply with the test and requirements based upon the results of the test. The HDT Action Plan is not a policy document; as such it does not contain planning policies however, it does contain a series of appropriate actions for the borough council to consider and explore going forward in an attempt to increase housing supply and delivery.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The overall aim of the HDT Action Plan is to put actions in place in an attempt to increase the levels of housing completions within the Borough in a sustainable manner. Housing completion levels in recent times have been below those required. Should under-delivery continue there is the potential for less Council Tax, Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus funding to be collected than there potentially could be.

6. Personnel Implications

- 6.1 None.

7. Statutory Considerations

- 7.1 The Housing Delivery Test has been introduced by Government through updated versions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). All Local Planning Authorities are subject to this new annual test and the requirements/penalties then placed upon each authority as dictated by the result.

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1 Pre-screening report attached.

9. Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The Action Plan is designed to mitigate the risk against being in a position where the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is engaged and therefore the housing supply policies in the local plan carry less/limited weight, so that development could take place in less desirable locations. It needs to be recognised that Plan and its Actions whilst they will mitigate the risk, they will not eliminate the risk as many of the factors involved are outside the control of the Borough Council. This ranges from a site owner's desire/priorities in building out, how much a land owner is financially asking for their site, right through to the wider political and financial climates of which the housing development industry operates.

10. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

10.1 None

11. Background Papers

11.1 The Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-measurement-rule-book>

11.2 The Housing Delivery Test: 2018 measurement:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2018-measurement>

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	Housing Delivery Test Action Plan				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	Existing				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	New test implemented by Government as part of the new NPPG & PPG for Local Planning Authorities. Results of the test dictates the actions required to be taken and sanctions installed upon the authority.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			✓	
	Disability			✓	
	Gender			✓	
	Gender Re-assignment			✓	
	Marriage/civil partnership			✓	
	Pregnancy & maternity			✓	
	Race			✓	
	Religion or belief			✓	
	Sexual orientation			✓	
Other (eg low income)			✓		
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	No	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member: Claire Dorgan			
Assessment completed by: Name Alex Fradley					
Job title Principal Planner (Policy)	Date 13/08/2019				