

Open

Extraordinary Council

Agenda

6pm
Thursday, 20th February 2020
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Council

Public Information

1. If you have any questions regarding the agenda, the attached papers or the meeting being webcast, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named below.
2. The Council meeting is open to the public except for any exempt/confidential items. These items are normally discussed at the end of the meeting
3. The public are welcome to speak at meetings of Council provided they have requested to speak in advance of the Agenda being published. Details of the guidance for public speaking can be found on our website www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk
4. If you have any special requirements regarding access to the venue and its facilities including audio and visual needs please let us know in advance so that we can make arrangements for you.
5. This Agenda can be made available in larger print on request; if you require a copy please contact:

Louisa Bright
Principal Committee and Member Services Officer
Wyre Forest District Council
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster
DY11 7WF
01562 732763
louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk



COUNCIL MEETING

12th February 2020

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL AND HONORARY ALDERMEN

PRESS AND PUBLIC

Dear Member

YOU ARE INVITED to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Wyre Forest District Council to be held **at 6.00p.m. on Thursday 20th February 2020**, in the Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster.

The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "I R Miller".

Ian Miller
Chief Executive

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members’ Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council’s constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI’s and ODI’s are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council’s Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

(A) TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL

The Council

1. Is the ultimate decision making Body.
2. Determines the Budget (but reserves powers to itself in relation to requirements).
3. Is responsible for appointing (and dismissing) the Leader of the Council.
4. Appoints at its Annual Meeting, the Regulatory Committees, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other Committees/Forums necessary to conduct the Council’s business.
5. Decides on matters where the Cabinet is not minded to determine a matter in accordance with Council policy.

(B) MATTERS RESERVED TO THE COUNCIL

1. Those reserved by Law e.g. levying a rate, borrowing money, promotion of or opposition to a Bill in Parliament.
2. Matters reserved to the Council by financial regulations.
3. The adoption and amendment of Standing Orders, including the powers and duties of Committees and other forums.
4. Power to make, amend, revoke or enact or enforce any byelaws.
5. The determination of the objectives of the Council.
6. Matters of new policy or variation of existing policy as contained within the budget and policy framework.
7. Local Development Framework adoption.
8. Any function where a decision would be contrary to a plan, policy, budget or strategy previously adopted by the Council, which would be contrary to the Council’s Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or Executive arrangements.
9. The Scheme of Delegations to Officers.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting is being filmed* for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website site (www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk).

At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. The footage recorded will be available to view on the Council's website for 6 months and shall be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to be filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and or training purposes.

If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council

Extraordinary Council

Thursday, 20th February 2020

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
3.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's scheme for public speaking at meetings of Council, five members of the public have registered to speak. <i>If you wish to speak on an urgent matter that has arisen since the deadline and you could not reasonably have known about it at the time, you should register your interest in speaking no later than 9am on the day of the meeting of Council. In the case of a request to speak on an urgent matter, the Solicitor to the Council will rule on whether or not the matter is urgent and that ruling will be final.</i>	
4.	Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036) To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place to agree the submission of the proposed Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) and Policies Map for forwarding to the Secretary of State (including all supporting evidence base documentation). Please note that the appendices to this report are available electronically. http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com55.htm#mt8302	7



WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL
20th February 2020

Subject: Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036)

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Fran Oborski - Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place.
CONTACT OFFICER:	Helen Smith
APPENDICES: <i>(Note: digital appendix).</i>	<p>Appendix 1 –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) and Policies Map (Submission version, January 2020) • Changes from the Adopted Policies Map (2013) to the Local Plan Submission Policies Map arising from the Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review • Amendments to the Pre-Submission Publication Document and Policies Map (July 2019) • Pre-Submission Publication Document and Policies Map (October 2018) <p>Appendix 2: Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications to the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36).</p> <p>Appendix 3: Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) and Consultation Summary Reports for the 2018 and 2019 Pre-Submission Consultations.</p> <p>Appendix 4: Traffic Demand in the Hagley Area (A456 Corridor).</p> <p>Appendix 5: Statements of Common Ground.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to:
- 1.2 Agree the submission of the proposed Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) and Policies Map for forwarding to the Secretary of State (including all supporting evidence base documentation). The final version of the Local Plan document and Policies Map for submission is shown in Appendix 1 of this report (*note: this includes the proposed Submission Plan document and the two Pre-Submission Plan documents that were consulted on in 2018 and 2019*).
- 1.3 Agree the submission of the Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications to the Local Plan for forwarding to the Secretary of State for the purposes of examination. The Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications is shown in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 1.4 Note the results of the pre-submission public consultations (undertaken in 2018 and 2019) and agree to the Consultation Statement and summary reports (for Regulation 22) for submission to the Secretary of State and to be published on the Council's website. The Consultation Statement and summary reports are set out in Appendix 3 of this report.
- 1.5 Note the technical study 'Traffic Demand in the Hagley Area (A456 Corridor)' as a background paper (which has yet to be published by the County Council). This technical study is shown in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 1.6 Agree the 'Statements of Common Ground' with third parties such as statutory agencies and adjoining Councils as shown in Appendix 5 of this report for forwarding to the Secretary of State.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Cabinet RECOMMENDS that Council:
 - 1) Approve the proposed Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-2036) and Policies Map (together with the associated evidence base, including the Sustainability Appraisal) for the purpose of its submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the PCPA 2004) (as shown in Appendix 1);
 - 2) Approve the Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications to the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) and Policies Map (as shown in Appendix 2);
 - 3) Approve the submission documents prepared pursuant to Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Local Planning Regulations) (see Appendix 3);

- 4) Note the technical study 'Traffic Demand in the Hagley Area (A456 Corridor)' (in Appendix 4) as a background paper (which has yet to be published by the County Council);
- 5) Approve the 'Statements of Common Ground' with third parties such as statutory agencies and adjoining Councils (as shown in Appendix 5); and
- 6) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments for the following matters relating to the Local Plan:
 - a. To take or authorise such steps as may be necessary for the independent examination of the Local Plan to be completed, including:
 - i. Proposing, requesting from and agreeing with the Inspector, at submission and through the examination, 'main modifications' to the wording of the Local Plan to ensure its soundness and legal compliance, in accordance with section 20(7C) of the PCPA 2004 (noting that 'main modifications' will subsequently be subject to public consultation prior to the completion of the examination and approved by Council);
 - ii. Agreeing 'additional (minor) modifications' to the wording of the Local Plan (noting that these will relate to minor changes which do not materially affect the policies in or soundness of the Plan and will subsequently be approved by Council at adoption);
 - iii. Entering into 'Statements of Common Ground' with third parties such as statutory agencies and adjoining Councils;
 - iv. Undertaking other tasks pursuant to informing and ensuring the effective running of the examination, including making submissions of hearing statements to the Inspector and providing to the Inspector such further or revised documents or information as may be necessary;
 - v. Agreeing Topic Papers including but not limited to housing growth, viability and Green Belt release (noting that these are for explanatory purposes only); and
 - vi. Publishing the recommendations of the Inspector in accordance with section 20(8) of the PCPA 2004 and Regulation 25 of the Local Planning Regulations.

3. Summary

- 3.1 Since 2015, Wyre Forest District Council has been working towards the preparation of a Local Plan for the period 2016 – 2036. The Local Plan sets out the policies and plans to guide future development within Wyre Forest District up to 2036. It will be the statutory document against which individual planning applications are determined. The Local Plan therefore has a key role in shaping the future of the district.

- 3.2 This report summarises the progress that has taken place since 16th July 2019, when Cabinet last made decisions on the Local Plan [to undertake consultation on the pre-submission Plan]. The Local Plan and its evidence base were subsequently published on 2nd September 2019 for a 6 week public consultation that took place up to 14th October 2019. Officers have considered the responses to this consultation carefully. Having done so, they are satisfied that there are no obstacles to the submission of the Local Plan as approved by Cabinet on 16th July 2019, that the relevant requirements have been complied with and that the Plan is ready for independent examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. This report therefore seeks formal authority from Council that the Local Plan be submitted for independent examination.

4. Strategic Implications

- 4.1 By virtue of the PCPA 2004, the Local Planning Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), each Local Authority should produce a Local Plan for its area. The Council's existing adopted Plan is out of date in certain respects and the Council now needs to ensure that it achieves a 'sound' Local Plan to replace it, in accordance with the Government's planning policy, the NPPF (what is required to meet the soundness test is set out in paragraph 14.4 of this report) and the National Planning Practice Guidance.

5. Background

- 5.1 The review of the Local Plan began in late 2015 with the Issues and Options consultation. Since the close of that consultation, officers worked with the Council's Local Plans Review Panel (LPRP) (an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group) to bring forward the next stage of the review which was the Preferred Options consultation (Regulation 18).
- 5.2 The Preferred Options consultation (Reg 18), which commenced on 15th June 2017 and ended on 14th August 2017, outlined a combination of Core sites and options A and B which gave two potential options for growth, concentrated or dispersed. It was carried out in compliance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2013). The consultation included contacting individuals and organisations on the Local Plan consultation database, public drop-in sessions, and information provided via the Council's website and social media. At the end of the consultation process the Council had received over 5,000 responses from members of the public, developers, organisations and statutory consultees.
- 5.3 A summary of the key issues from the Preferred Options consultation was made available to LPRP at the LPRP meeting on 15th January 2018. Feedback from the consultation on the preferred options sites was also provided to LPRP at the meetings held on 19th February 2018 and 19th March 2018.

- 5.4 Following the Preferred Options consultation, work commenced on the Pre-Submission Publication version of the Local Plan. Further technical evidence base work was undertaken in relation to the proposed site allocations and the findings of this with officer recommendations were presented to LPRP on 24th September 2018 and 15th October 2018. LPRP thus reviewed the proposed site allocations and made their recommendations to officers.
- 5.5 On 15th October 2018 LPRP considered the proposed Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication document (Background Paper 19.2) in its entirety. This enabled the LPRP to consider the draft policies, including the development strategy proposed for the district. This October 2018 version of the Pre-Submission Document and supporting evidence base studies were then approved by Cabinet on 30th October 2018 and consulted on during November/December 2018.
- 5.6 However, following receipt of responses to that consultation, it was agreed with Worcestershire County Council that the transport evidence would benefit from further clarification, and it was necessary to update some of the technical evidence base documents.
- 5.7 The sites to be included in the Pre-Submission document could be finalised only when the technical evidence base studies were completed and consistent with other evidence base documents due to their interdependency. The key studies that were updated/produced are as follows:-
- Transport Evidence Base Paper (June 2019)
 - A450 Corridor Enhancement Report (June 2019)
 - SLC Rail Technical Note on Blakedown Station Car Park Needs (June 2019)
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan (June 2019)
 - Viability Assessment Note (June 2019)
 - WFDC Golf Facility Review (June 2019)
 - Burlish Golf Course Vision document (June 2019)
- 5.8 The Council's Five Year Housing Land Supply Report (5YHLS) was also updated to provide the most up-to-date information on the Council's five year housing supply as of 1st April 2019. It also incorporated the Government's introduction of the Housing Delivery Test and how this affects Wyre Forest District.
- 5.9 These updates to the various evidence base studies led to sections of the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document needing to be updated. As a result, the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document (October 2018) required updates to the following sections:-
- Foreword
 - Chapter 1 – Introduction and Context
 - Chapter 6 – A Sustainable Future: Development Strategy
 - Policy 8G – Site Provision for Travelling Showpeople
 - Chapter 10 – A Good Place to do Business – amendment to Table 10.0.1

- Chapter 13 – Transport and Accessibility
 - Part C of Local Plan – Proposed Allocations to include:
 - Site allocation at Blakedown and amendment to the settlement boundary for Blakedown village.
 - Removal of Yew Tree Walk site AKR/18.
 - Site allocation LI/10 – a change to employment use.
 - Site allocation LI/12 – a change to Travelling Showpeople use.
 - Site allocation LI/13 – new employment site.
 - Minster Road Outdoor Sports Area.
 - South Kidderminster Enterprise Park.
 - Local Plan Policies Map updates.
- 5.10 The amendments to the Local Plan and the updated technical evidence base documents were presented to LPRP for their consideration and recommendations on 1st July 2019. The amendments to the Local Plan can be viewed in Background Paper 19.1 of this report.
- 5.11 The recommendations of the LPRP were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4th July 2019. Their subsequent recommendations were reported to Cabinet at the meeting on 16th July 2019.
- 5.12 On 16th July 2019, Cabinet agreed to the following recommendations:
- a) Approve the Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication documentation for the re-opened public consultation (Regulation 19);*
 - b) Agree the technical evidence base studies as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan; and*
 - c) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Capital Investments to make any necessary amendments to the consultation documentation up to the launch of the consultation that may arise from the receipt of additional information following this meeting.*
- 6. Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication Consultation (Regulation 19)**
- 6.1 The Pre-Submission Publication Consultation (Reg 19) represented the third stage in the review of the District's Local Plan. The first stage was the Issues and Options Consultation in late 2015. This was followed by the second stage in Summer 2017 for the Preferred Options consultation.
- 6.2 The aim of the Pre-Submission consultation was to seek views on whether the emerging Local Plan is legally compliant and if it is considered to be 'sound'.
- 6.3 A consultation on the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document was held in November/December 2018. The Council decided to re-open the pre-submission consultation to allow further representations to be made on the Local Plan following updates to some of the evidence base studies. This reopening of the consultation was approved by Cabinet on 16th July 2019. The

consultation reopened on 2nd September 2019 and ran for 6 weeks closing on 14th October 2019. A detailed summary of the consultation responses received for both the 2018 and the 2019 consultations are set out in Appendix 3. These consultation summaries (under Regulation 22) in Appendix 3 will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination alongside the Local Plan.

- 6.4 The consultation included contacting individuals and organisations on the Local Plan consultation database, public drop-in sessions, and information provided via the Council's website and social media. In total, the Council received 1588 responses to the consultations held in 2018 and 2019. Of these, over 53% were from individuals, 25% from representatives of organisations and the remaining from agents on behalf of either organisations or individuals.
- 6.5 All consultation responses received by the Council for Pre-Submission consultations will be submitted to the Government appointed Planning Inspector. This includes the consultation responses received for both the November/December 2018 consultation and the September/October 2019 consultation.

7. Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36)

- 7.1 The Pre-Submission Publication document took account of:
- The extensive evidence base that has been built up since 2015;
 - The Issues and Options consultation reported in December 2015 to Cabinet;
 - The Preferred Options consultation reported to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet in October 2018;
 - Duty to Co-operate conversations with neighbouring local authorities, the County Council, relevant Statutory Organisations and key infrastructure providers;
 - Advice received from the LPRP.
- 7.2 Given the changes to the updated technical evidence base documents and the National Planning Policy context, attention was particularly drawn to the following key issues:
- Housing need and land supply
 - Transport Modelling and transport evidence
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - Viability Assessment update
 - Changes made to the consultation version of the Local Plan

7.3 Housing need and land supply

- 7.4 The Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) seeks to allocate a sufficient number of sites to accommodate the housing need identified in the Wyre Forest Housing Need Study (HNS) 2018. The HNS (2018) report considered

the future housing need for Wyre Forest District based on the standard methodology developed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Based on the standard methodology and 2017 affordability ratios, the minimum local housing need for Wyre Forest was calculated as 276 dwellings per year using the 2016-based MHCLG household projections.

- 7.5 When the standard methodology for calculating housing need was first introduced during September 2018, the 2016-based household projections were used in the calculation. Across the country as a whole, this meant that the Government would not achieve its goal of building 300,000 dwellings a year by the mid 2020s with delivery estimates as low as 212,000 dwellings per annum expected using this methodology. In Wyre Forest, the 2016-based household projections gave a housing need figure of 276 dwellings per annum. This is the figure used in the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36).
- 7.6 During 2018/19 the Government consulted on proposed changes to national planning policy and its associated guidance including the standardised methodology for assessing local housing need. As a result of this consultation, the NPPF and its associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (in relation to Housing and Economic Needs Assessment) were both updated in February 2019. These changes have implications for the district's housing requirement.
- 7.7 The updated NPPF and PPG now requires housing needs assessments to use the 2014-based household projections to set the baseline for the standard method calculation (as nationally this increased the numbers of dwellings that would be expected to be delivered, compared to using the 2016 figures). Whilst in most cases nationally this would give rise to a higher requirement figure, for Wyre Forest this recalculation gave a lower figure of 248 dwellings per annum.
- 7.8 Using the 2014-based household projections instead of the 2016 ones would generate a national requirement for around 266,000 dwellings which is still far short of the 300,000 the Government aspire to. It should also be remembered that the standard methodology establishes a **minimum** need and not an **actual** housing need.
- 7.9 The PPG Housing and Economic Needs Assessment as updated in February 2019 is clear that the standard methodology provides a **minimum** annual local housing need figure and that a Local Plan will be considered sound if it plans to meet housing need according to the standard method. However, any method reliant on the 2016-based household projections will not be considered sound (presumably on the basis that it was assumed that the new calculation would give rise to a higher figure). The Wyre Forest Local Plan is using the 2016-based data, so this departure from using the standardised methodology will need to be fully justified. In WFDC's situation, the housing need is actually higher using the 2016 data than the 2014 data so this helps to

meet the Government's aspirations of delivering more housing. This will be explained to the Inspector by way of a Topic Paper.

7.10 As noted, the revised NPPF sets out that the housing requirement calculated using the standard methodology should be used as the **starting point** for looking at housing need and does not constitute the actual need. The justification for using the higher housing number in the Local Plan is as follows:

- Evidence from the Housing Needs Study (2018) suggests that there is a significant need for affordable housing within the District with 158 dwellings needed each year of the Plan period. It is however, not realistic to expect this amount of affordable housing to be delivered. Since April 2010, 777 affordable dwellings have been delivered – an average of 86 a year. The majority of these have been provided by The Community Housing Group on 100% affordable sites. A target of 90 affordable homes per year has been set for the Local Plan. This is seen as realistic. Viability issues have reduced the amount of affordable housing being brought forward on large brownfield sites such as the former British Sugar (12%) and Georgian Carpets (24%) sites. According to the Housing Needs Study, 22% of households cannot afford even social rent levels and therefore it is paramount that a higher housing figure is used in the plan to encourage social rent housing on private developments via S106 agreements as opposed to “affordable rent” which is the rental product funded by Homes England to Registered Providers on non-s106 sites.
- The North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration team have been successful in bringing new firms into the district to replace jobs lost with the decline of the carpet industry. In order to attract high quality well-paid jobs into the District, we not only need to provide land for employment development but a wide range of housing on attractive sites at a range of locations. This will encourage people to relocate to the District, not just to live but also to work.
- The Council is now proposing an allocation of approximately 6,365 dwellings over a 20 year period (2016-36). It is recognised as prudent good practice that the Council allocates around 15% more than required, to allow for sites not coming forward. Using the 276 figure, the Local Plan would be over allocating by 15%.
- A further reason for using a higher housing figure is to help with the overall national housing supply situation. An annual delivery of 276 dwellings is considered feasible. Proposals for a number of large brownfield allocations are now well-advanced and these are expected to have developers on site prior to the Local Plan examination where potential Green Belt releases will be debated.
- It is proposed that a Topic Paper will be produced for the Examination to assist the Inspector in understanding the Council's reasons for using the 2016 household projection figures.

7.11 **Transport modelling and transport evidence updates**

- 7.12 The Transport Evidence Paper (June 2019) details the transport modelling work undertaken by the County Council and their consultant, Jacobs, to assess the growth and identify the transport interventions necessary to support the Local Plan.
- 7.13 The results of the modelling work at AM and PM peak travel times has identified impacts on the road network around Kidderminster and the Kidderminster ring road is expected to experience worsening congestion. The A449, A450 and Stourport town centre are also expected to experience worsening congestion. The highway network will experience average speeds reduced to 23 to 24kph during peak periods and journey times along the key routes are all expected to worsen as a result of the proposed growth.
- 7.14 The results of the transport modelling work have been used to identify the measures contained within the transport section of the Wyre Forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). In order to mitigate the impact a combination of measures across all modes of travel is required. Investment in alternative modes of travel to provide real travel choice and sustainable options will help to reduce congestion and delays across the transport network. The County Council has produced a separate report on the proposed A450 corridor enhancements which forms part of the evidence base documents and was consulted on during the 2019 consultation.
- 7.15 Since the 2019 pre-submission consultation, Worcestershire County Council has produced a technical study 'Traffic Demand in the Hagley Area (A456 Corridor)' which has yet to be formally published. This technical study has been produced following Duty to Co-operate discussions with Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council. The study will be a background paper to the Statement of Common Ground that is being prepared by Wyre Forest District Council jointly between Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council. The technical study considers the potential traffic impact that the proposed strategic site allocations in the Wyre Forest District Local Plan may have on Hagley, which is located outside of the Wyre Forest District area. The technical study concludes that the traffic impact would be minimal from the proposed site allocations and that most of the congestion caused in Hagley is from traffic passing through the Wyre Forest District and not originating from the district itself. Worcestershire County Council also conclude in the technical study that demand mitigation for the A456 corridor *"centres on focussing investment at Blakedown Station expansion to provide strategic rail-based park and ride facilities and investing in improvements at Kidderminster station and station travel plans to support growth, in line with the sustainable development principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. Together, these stations will provide genuinely attractive travel alternatives for a significant percentage of trips using this corridor, mitigating the impacts of demand growth on the busy A456. When station car park charges come forward at stations within the West Midlands Conurbation in future, this is expected to result in a net uplift in demand to use stations in Worcestershire."*

7.16 **SLC Rail report about Blakedown Station Car Park needs**

7.17 A separate report on Blakedown Railway Station was provided by Worcestershire County Council as part of the suite of documents forming the transport evidence for the Local Plan, and was consulted on as part of the pre-submission consultation undertaken in 2019. This separate report sets out the justification as to why an additional car park is required at Blakedown railway station, which would be in addition to the site already allocated within the emerging Local Plan at Station Yard for 80 car parking spaces. The additional car park would be located on the site off Station Road and would provide an additional 170 car parking spaces plus 50 residential units. The justification for this additional car parking site includes the following reasons:

- The current station only offers car parking for 10 spaces. As a result of this, there are many vehicles parked on the local streets next to the railway. The additional car park would help to relieve the pressure for parking on the local roads.
- Worcestershire County Council's Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS-2017) identifies increased railway station car parking capacity as a key facilitator in providing access to transformed, sustainable rail connectivity between the County and other UK economies.
- The WRIS has assumed that the ratio of car parking spaces to passenger numbers should remain, at minimum, 1 to 9 given the rural nature of the county, requiring in turn a minimum growth of more than 1,577 new spaces across Worcestershire.
- The significant growth proposed at Lea Castle and East of Kidderminster within the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review provide further justification for an increased demand and therefore parking capacity at Blakedown railway station.
- The additional car parking would create a sustainable transport hub.

7.18 The response the Council received from Worcestershire County Council to the Pre-Submission Local Plan consultation held in September/October 2019 stated the following about the site at Blakedown railway station:

“Worcestershire County Council welcome the allocation of land for the further expansion of Blakedown station and associated car parking, in line with WCC recommendations. This reflects the opportunity that rail offers to mitigate existing and future generated demand on strategic highway corridors (especially the A456), enabling genuinely sustainable growth opportunities in the Wyre Forest.”

7.19 During the 2019 consultation, the Council also received a response from the Black Country Authorities in support of the Blakedown railway station car park proposal. The response from the Black Country Authorities states:

“The A456 forms part of the West Midlands Key Route Network and a study is underway to bring forward measures to improve the management of this route, which includes a short section beyond the Dudley boundary to the junction at Hagley. However, these resulting measures will not by themselves

deal with the future demands on this corridor. Rail and associated strategic park & ride facilities will have an important role to play. We would therefore like to place on record our support for the proposed development of a park & ride facility at Blakedown. This should intercept trips, particularly those bound for Birmingham, much earlier and will make better use of existing and future rail capacity on the Birmingham-Worcester route. In turn, this should provide relief to the highway network including the heavily congested junctions in Hagley.”

7.20 Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council have objected to the proposed site allocation for car parking and residential at land off Station Drive (WFR/CB/3) near Blakedown railway station. Their reasons for objection include:

- *“The evidence is flawed;*
- *The treatment of Kidderminster and Blakedown Stations should not be interchangeable;*
- *The identified housing sites in the Plan to the eastern side of Kidderminster are not sustainable in transport terms which has caused the “push” eastwards to Blakedown;*
- *The Council’s approach is contrary to NPPF;*
- *Over intensification of use of a site and loss of amenity to neighbouring residents;*
- *Compromised Access;*
- *No apparent regard to the recent Churchill & Blakedown Neighbourhood Plan.”*

7.21 **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)**

7.22 The purpose of the Wyre Forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to set out the infrastructure requirements as part of the evidence base to support the proposals contained in the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review, which covers the period 2016 to 2036. The revised IDP was published with the Pre-Submission consultation in September/October 2019.

7.23 Infrastructure can be defined in simple terms as the facilities that help local people to live their everyday lives. It includes physical “hard” infrastructure (e.g. roads), physical social infrastructure (e.g. school buildings, new or expanded health centres) and green infrastructure (e.g. woodland).

7.24 The IDP carries ‘living document’ status and is subject to on-going change. It is a technical evidence document designed to inform policy rather than be policy itself. The NPPF requires an IDP to be produced alongside a Local Plan at plan making stage. Key statements in the NPPF are made at paragraphs 16b, 20 and 57.

7.25 The total infrastructure cost for the Local Plan has been identified as £124 million. This is made up of the following infrastructure requirements:-

- Transport = £63.8m

- Education = £45.8m (total cost of primary and secondary education infrastructure)
- Sport & Recreation = £5.05m
- GPs = £4.1m
- Acute Health = £4m
- Police = £749k
- Waterway = £430k

7.26 The IDP has identified secured funding for £19.1m and a possible £27.6m from S106 contributions. Therefore, the IDP has identified a funding gap of £77.3 million. Note that nearly all infrastructure delivery plans produced will have an infrastructure funding gap and this IDP is no different. The funding scenario is always in a state of change and any funding gap will be a snapshot in time. Nevertheless, this version of the IDP can provide a sound estimate of the funding gap as it is currently known. It is important to note the funding gap doesn't mean infrastructure projects will not be delivered. This is because the funding gap is expected to reduce over the lifetime of the plan as contributions are collected and appropriate funding bids are successful. The emerging Local Plan, supported by its IDP, will play an important role in supporting a successful bidding process. Future work with developers, infrastructure providers including WCC and LEPs will be vital to ensure deliverability.

7.27 **Viability Assessment update**

7.28 A Pre-Submission Viability Note was completed to provide an update of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan viability position prior to submission and was consulted on during the 2019 (Reg 19) consultation. This is the third time viability has been reviewed in this plan making process following:

- Local Plan Viability Assessment (May 2017);
- Local Plan Viability Assessment Update (October 2018).

7.29 The headline issues the report identified included:

- This updated report considers changes in National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance alongside an update to the proposed infrastructure costs on the strategic sites in the plan.
- Since the last assessment infrastructure costs and requests for revenue support for services have increased from an average of £12,994 to £17,494 per dwelling.
- This is due to an increase in transport and education costs with new requests being made by NHS Acute Trust and WFDC Waste Collection.
- The affordable housing percentage was tested at 30% ranging down to 0%.
- With the previous viability position of affordable housing at 25% and full infrastructure costs and revenue costs the viability has worsened.

7.30 The Council is mindful of the importance of proposing the allocation of viable and deliverable sites and all of the proposed sites within the Local Plan are

considered to be deliverable. Separate viability appraisals accompany the two main development sites at Lea Castle and to the east of Kidderminster and are being agreed as part of the Statements of Common Ground with Homes England and Taylor Wimpey respectively. It is proposed that the Inspector will be provided with a Topic Paper explaining viability in respect of the remaining sites being proposed.

8. Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications

- 8.1 The Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications is set out in Appendix 2 of this report. The table shows the proposed minor changes to the Local Plan and Policies Map, which includes minor amendments, i.e. typographical edits, formatting and factual amendments to the Local Plan that are necessary for clarity and consistency. It should be noted that these changes will not materially affect the policies in or soundness of the Plan and will be considered by the Planning Inspector at examination stage.

9. Sustainability Appraisal

- 9.1 When producing Local Plans, local authorities are required to consider, at each stage of production, the impacts their proposals are likely to have on sustainable development. The emerging Local Plan is subject to ongoing Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) as required through NPPF. SA/SEA is a means of ensuring that the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan are identified, described and appraised to identify how they support the Council's sustainable development objectives.
- 9.2 At the Pre-Submission Publication stage of the Local Plan a SA/SEA was undertaken and made available for the Regulation 19 consultation. The Sustainability Appraisal is a detailed technical document and is an important background paper to the emerging Local Plan. It has been used to inform the Local Plan at each plan making stage and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and undergo examination alongside the Local Plan.

10. Duty to Co-operate and Statements of Common Ground

- 10.1 The Localism Act and NPPF introduced a new Duty to Co-operate, which requires public bodies to work together on cross-boundary strategic priorities. This duty is built into the 'positively prepared' and 'effective' tests of soundness for the examination of development plan documents. The duty is one of co-operation; it is not a duty to agree.
- 10.2 A series of meetings and discussions with neighbouring local authorities and key stakeholders has taken place to ensure joint working on key issues, as part of the preparation of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36). These meetings and discussions have also included the Black Country Authorities and Birmingham City Council.

- 10.3 Appendix 5 sets out the Statements of Common Ground which shows how the Council has addressed the Duty to Co-operate during the preparation of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan. These Statements of Common Ground will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, along with the Local Plan itself. As part of the recommendations in part 2 of this Report, Cabinet is asked to agree to delegate authority for entering into 'Statements of Common Ground' with third parties such as statutory agencies and adjoining Councils. This is because some of the Statements of Common Ground may need updating during the course of the examination period as new evidence comes to light which makes it possible to resolve any outstanding issues/disagreements. There are also ongoing discussions with some Duty to Co-operate partners that will continue after the Cabinet and Full Council meetings in February, which will need approval before submitting to the Secretary of State for the purposes of the examination.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 Corporate Leadership Team.
- 11.2 The Local Plan has been considered by the Local Plans Review Panel on 5th February 2020, Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th February 2020, and Cabinet on 11th February 2020.

12. Related Decisions

- 12.1 Previous stages of development and consultation on the local plan, as set out in the report above.

13. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 13.1 Amendments to the Wyre Forest District Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication Document (2019).
- 13.2 Wyre Forest District Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication Document (2018).
- 13.3 Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review Preferred Options Document (2017).
- 13.4 Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review Issues and Options Document (2015).

14. Implications

14.1 Financial Implications

The cost of preparing the Local Plan Review has been met by the Planning Policy budget. The District Council will be required to meet the costs of the examination of the Local Plan and this will be met from the existing Planning Policy budgets.

14.2 Legal and policy implications

- 14.3 The procedures which the Council is required to follow when producing a Local Plan derive from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 14.4 The legislation states that a local planning authority must only submit a plan for examination which it considers to be sound. This is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) as being:
- **Positively Prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs, and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.
- 14.5 In order for the draft Local Plan to pass the tests of soundness, it is necessary for it to be based on an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base. The Council also has a legal duty to comply with the Statement of Community Involvement in preparing the Plan and also has a legal ‘Duty to Co-operate’.
- 14.6 Should the Local Plan be successful at examination stage, the District Council will be required to formally adopt the plan and it will become part of the Development Plan for the purposes of determining planning applications.

15. Risk Management

- 15.1 The main risks in failing to progress a Local Plan for the Wyre Forest District in compliance with laws, regulations and guidance are as follows:
- The plan is found ‘unsound’ at examination leading to ‘withdrawal’ of further work;
 - Direct interventions by Government into the District Council’s Local Plan making;
 - Inability to steer, promote or restrict development across its administrative area;
 - Potential damage to the Council’s image and reputation if a development plan is not adopted in an appropriate timeframe.
 - Failure to meet the Government’s Housing Delivery Test.

16. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 16.1 The Council is conscious of the importance of the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 in preparing the Local Plan and a full EIA has been undertaken. The EIA indicates that a number of the policies included within the Local Plan have a positive effect in helping to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. However, the EIA screening has highlighted that there is a potential adverse impact to the Gypsies and Travellers community arising from the 2014 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) which the Council intends to refresh and provide to the Inspector as part of the examination of the Plan.

17. Wards affected

- 17.1 All wards within the district are affected.

18. Appendices

- 18.1 Appendix 1 –
- Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36) and Policies Map (Submission version, January 2020)
 - Changes from the Adopted Policies Map (2013) to the Local Plan Submission Policies Map arising from the Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review
 - Amendments to the Pre-Submission Publication Document and Policies Map (July 2019)
 - Pre-Submission Publication Document and Policies Map (October 2018)
- 18.2 Appendix 2 – Table of Additional (Minor) Modifications to the Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2016-36)
- 18.3 Appendix 3 – Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) and Consultation Summary Reports for the 2018 and 2019 Pre-Submission Consultations
- 18.4 Appendix 4 – Traffic Demand in the Hagley Area (A456 Corridor)
- 18.5 Appendix 5 – Statements of Common Ground

19. Background Papers

- 19.1 Amendments to the Wyre Forest District Local Plan Pre-Submission Publication document (2019):
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/4656986/Amendments-document-2019.pdf>
- 19.2 Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Publication document (October 2018):
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/3993526/Pre-Submission-Publication-October-2018-.pdf>
- 19.3 Local Plan Review Preferred Options document (June 2017):

<http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/3024240/Preferred-Options-Document-June-2017.pdf>

- 19.4 Local Plan Review Issues and Options document (September 2015):
<http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/1462993/I-O-Consultation-Version-September-2015-WEB.pdf>

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Helen Smith

Title: Spatial Planning Manager

Contact Number: 01562 732195