

Minutes of: **CABINET**

Date of Meeting: 11 November 2020

Present: Councillor E O'Brien (in the Chair)
Councillors L Smith, C Cummins, D Jones, A Simpson,
A Quinn, T Tariq, J Black and T Rafiq

Also in attendance: Councillor N Jones
Councillor J Mason
Councillor M Powell

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: None

CA.6 GMSF

The Leader of the Council, Councillor O'Brien presented a report setting out some background information that gives a summary of what the GMSF is and why it is being produced.

Following consultation on two previous drafts in 2016 and 2019, Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment (the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework [GMSF]) has now progressed to the Publication stage.

This Publication GMSF is the version that each of the Greater Manchester districts believe should be submitted to the Government for Examination.

It then sets out a strategic overview of what the GMSF is planning for across Greater Manchester and highlights the key proposals for Bury in terms of homes, jobs, the environment, infrastructure and other background information. It also describes the key benefits that the GMSF will bring to Bury and examines the implications of Covid and the recently released Planning White Paper before setting out when and how consultation on the Publication GMSF will take place.

Delegated decisions:

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the GMSF: Publication Draft 2020, including strategic site allocations and green belt boundary amendments, and reference to the potential use of compulsory purchase powers to assist with site assembly, and the supporting background documents, for publication pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a period for representations between 1 December 2020 and 26 January 2021.;
2. Recommends that Council approves the GMSF: Publication Draft 2020 for submission to the Secretary of State for examination following the period for representations;

3. Delegates to the Director of Economic Regeneration & Capital Growth authority to approve the relevant Statement of Common Ground(s) required pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework 2019;
4. Delegates authority to the Lead Chief Executive, Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Leader for Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure to make minor or non-material amendments to the GMSF: Publication Draft 2020 and background documents prior to their publication.

Reasons for the decision:

An up-to-date plan – Bury's current development plan is the Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1997 and is now significantly out of date. The Council has twice tried and failed to get a replacement plan in place over that time but this met with significant challenge as it did not meet housing needs.

The Government has indicated that it will intervene in and potentially take over the plan-making process where local authorities do not have an up-to-date plan by December 2023 – which could remove local controls over plan-making.

The GMSF will enable Bury to avoid these sanctions by meeting its statutory requirement to have an up-to-date plan in place covering strategic planning issues.

A stronger local economy – One of the key aims of the GMSF is to significantly boost the competitiveness and economic output from the north of the conurbation in order to address the current imbalance in the Greater Manchester economy. The proposal at the Northern Gateway (Heywood/Pilsworth) is key to the delivery of this objective. The jobs and investment generated from this site will help to create a sustained reduction in inequalities and improve the lives of our residents whilst also helping in post-Brexit and post-Covid recovery.

Significant infrastructure investment - In contrast to identifying smaller, short-term sites, the GMSF also allows us to bring forward a small number of large, strategic sites that can pave the way for significant investment in the physical and social infrastructure required to support development.

Reduced impact on the Green Belt - Collaborative working on the GMSF by the ten Greater Manchester districts has allowed for a redistribution of housing needs to enable more development to be focussed in more sustainable locations, such as in the inner core areas of Manchester and Salford. This has enabled Bury to off-set 2,547 homes from our Local Housing Need to other districts which would otherwise have to be accommodated within the Borough. This has allowed Bury to reduce the amount of Green Belt land required for development.

If the GMSF did not exist or if Bury were not a participant in the process, the strategic matters that are currently dealt with through the GMSF would still need to be covered by the Local Plan. However, the advantages of collaborative working outlined above would be lost.

Other option considered and rejected:

To reject the recommendations contained within the report.