

## **NEW WYCOMBE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN, LITTLE MARLOW LAKES COUNTRY PARK AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY RECEIPTS**

**Cabinet Member:** David Johncock and Graham Peart

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

**Officer contact:** Chris Schmidt-Reid ext.3551

[chris\\_schmidt-reid@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:chris_schmidt-reid@wycombe.gov.uk)

Elaine Jewell ext.3800

[elaine\\_jewell@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:elaine_jewell@wycombe.gov.uk)

### ***RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL***

1. That the pre-submission version of the new Wycombe District Local Plan as set out at Appendix 2 be approved (subject to proof reading and factual corrections) for statutory consultation and then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate/Government for Examination.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Sustainability in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainability to:
  - a. Prepare a schedule of proposed modifications to the Plan prior to final submission of the plan to the Planning Inspectorate.
  - b. Agree modifications to the plan arising during the Examination including those identified by the Inspector as being required to make the plan sound.
3. That the Council provides a Country Park to be known as 'Little Marlow Lakes Country Park' under s.7(1) of the Countryside Act 1968, and delegates to the Head of Community Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Services, the facilitation of delivery of the Park.

### ***PROPOSED DECISION***

4. That Cabinet agree to modify the resolution made in September 2015 as follows: "*That of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received relating to all development in the parish of Princes Risborough, 25% of those receipts should be transferred to Princes Risborough Town Council for the duration of the Local Plan period (up to the year 2033).*"

5. That Cabinet agree that of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received relating to all developments in Longwick-cum-Ilmer, 25% of those receipts should be transferred to Longwick-cum-Ilmer Parish Council until such time as a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish is made.

***Reason for Recommendation to Council and Proposed Decision***

- i. To ensure the Council has an up to date Local Plan to guide development over the next 15 years, including setting out new housing and employment targets and the strategy and locations for new development in the period up to 2033.
- ii. To satisfy Government requirements to produce a Local Plan.
- iii. To formally recognise the role that the Little Marlow Lakes area plays in providing a range of recreational uses, and its future potential.
- iv. To ensure that the Princes Risborough and Longwick-cum-Ilmer Parishes, which are taking considerable development, are not disadvantaged in their CIL receipts by the lack of neighbourhood plans, for reasons outside of their control and to provide appropriate local discretion in the spending of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

**Corporate Implications**

1. Local Plans are prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the detailed procedures for preparing the Plan are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Council also has to take account of national planning policy and practice guidance in preparing its plans.
2. One of the legal duties in preparing a plan is to comply with the “Duty to Cooperate” with other authorities and organisations on strategic issues. National Policy requires authorities to submit a “sound” plan and sets out specific tests of soundness that the plan has to comply with and against which it is tested at the examination stage.

3. To date the Council has been preparing the plan in accordance with Regulation 18 of the regulations. It is recommended that it proceeds to the publication stage (Regulation 19) and the subsequent submission stage (Regulation 22)
4. Cabinet at its meeting in June 2017 agreed additional funding to support the preparation of the Local Plan. At this stage costs are covered by existing funding allocations although as highlighted previously there are some remain uncertainties with regard to the completion of the plan, mainly in relation to the cost of the examination process.
5. The Plan identifies a number of sites owned by the Council as allocations for housing and/or employment development. Whilst the Council's ownership is not a factor in determining whether a site is allocated, there are potential financial implications from the proposed allocation of the sites.
6. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and agreed with the Council's equalities officer and has identified no adverse effects in terms of equalities.
7. There are a number of ongoing risks associated with the preparation of the Local Plan. These include:
  - the risk of the Plan process failing the Duty to Cooperate and having to effectively start again;
  - the plan being found unsound by the Inspector at the examination stage and having to effectively start again;
  - the risk that the evidential and policy basis of the plan becomes out of date as a result of Government policy and practice guidance changes;
  - the risk of cost increases due to a longer than anticipated period of examination or a substantial increase in planning inspector fees.
8. Council Officers working with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainability, have been regularly reviewing the risks associated with the preparation of the Plan and this report summarises how those risks have been mitigated where possible.

9. Regulation 59A and 59B of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended) impose a duty on CIL Collecting Authorities to pass 15% of CIL receipts collected in an area to the relevant parish or town council. This rises to 25% in areas with adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans.
10. Regulation 59C provides that a parish or town council must use the CIL receipts passed to it “to support the development of the local council’s area, or any part of that area, by funding (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.”
11. The financial implications of this recommendation are that the Council would receive reduced CIL receipts relating to development in Princes Risborough of approx. £177,000 (in addition to the £2million previously resolved in September 2016), and Longwick of approximately £500,000. However, as noted above either way CIL receipts need to be spent on infrastructure and the District and Town Councils (and indeed other authorities and agencies) will need to work closely together to ensure the right infrastructure is delivered to support the growth of the town.
12. Section 7 of the 1968 Countryside Act subject to the provisions therein empowers local councils to provide country parks. The land does not need to be in their ownership, as the provision of the country park can be on such terms as may be agreed with the owners and any other persons whose authority is required.

## **Executive Summary**

13. The new Local Plan sets out a vision for the future of the District and sets out the objectives and strategic policies necessary to achieve that vision. The plan also includes allocations for sites to meet the housing and economic needs for the District for the period up to 2033 and articulates a number of development management policies which will be used as the basis for determining planning applications along with the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan, adopted in 2013.

14. The Plan sets a target of 10,925 for the number of new homes to be built over the period of the plan and requires 21 ha of new employment land to be allocated. This level of housing does not meet the Council's objectively assessed need for housing due to the constraints of suitable land supply within the District, but as part of the Duty to Co-operate the Council has agreed with Aylesbury Vale District Council and the other Bucks Districts and the Bucks Thames Valley LEP that the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan will accommodate the remaining 2,275 "unmet housing need" of the District. Aylesbury Vale District Council intends to publish its Local Plan shortly.
15. The Local Plan allocates a wide range of sites to meet the District's assessed housing needs. It also proposes a number of changes to the green belt to release sites to contribute towards meeting these targets. A number of sites have also been identified in and adjacent to villages in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A key part of the Local Plan is the expansion of Princes Risborough, where 2,650 homes overall are planned for, mainly via a sustainable urban extension to the town. It is anticipated that only just over 2,000 of those 2,650 homes will be built within the plan period up to 2033.
16. A substantial amount of work has been undertaken to assess and justify the levels of infrastructure required to support the Local Plan and the expansion of Princes Risborough, in particular.
17. The Local Plan is supported by a large number of technical reports and has been assessed via a sustainability appraisal as the most appropriate strategy for meeting development needs up to 2033. It is considered to be a "sound" plan and that the Duty to Cooperate has been satisfied up to this point.
18. On this basis it is recommended to Council that the pre-submission version of the new Wycombe District Local Plan should now be published for statutory consultation and then submitted for Examination.
19. The Local Plan will be published for consultation for a period of 6 weeks, starting in October. Once the consultation is completed the Local Plan, along with all representations received, a summary of the issues raised by those representations, and all the supporting evidence, will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination. It is anticipated this will be in March 2018. The Council cannot make changes to the Local Plan between the consultation and submission stages.

20. However, there is scope for the Council to address, through a schedule of minor modifications at the time of submission, issues that arise from the publication consultation. Through this schedule the Council is indicating to the Inspector that it would be happy for these changes to be made, were the Inspector minded to make them. It can shorten the period of the examination by reducing the issues for discussion at that stage. Minor modifications are changes that would not fundamentally change the Local Plan, for example, they could include changes that add clarification on particular points, wording changes to ensure consistency within the Local Plan or factual changes/corrections.
21. The examination is expected to take place in the summer of 2018 – the exact timing will be for the Planning Inspectorate to decide. Once the Local Plan has been examined the Inspector may identify modifications that need to be made to the Local Plan to make it sound, these would be major modifications to the Local Plan and would be subject to public consultation. Delegated authority is sought for the Head of Planning and Sustainability to agree any such modifications in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainability. This decision can be referred to Cabinet if the changes are of a strategic and significant nature.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

22. The new Local Plan shares with the SCS the Vision for the District and is the spatial expression of the SCS delivering the priorities of the Council as set out in the strategy.

### **Background and Issues**

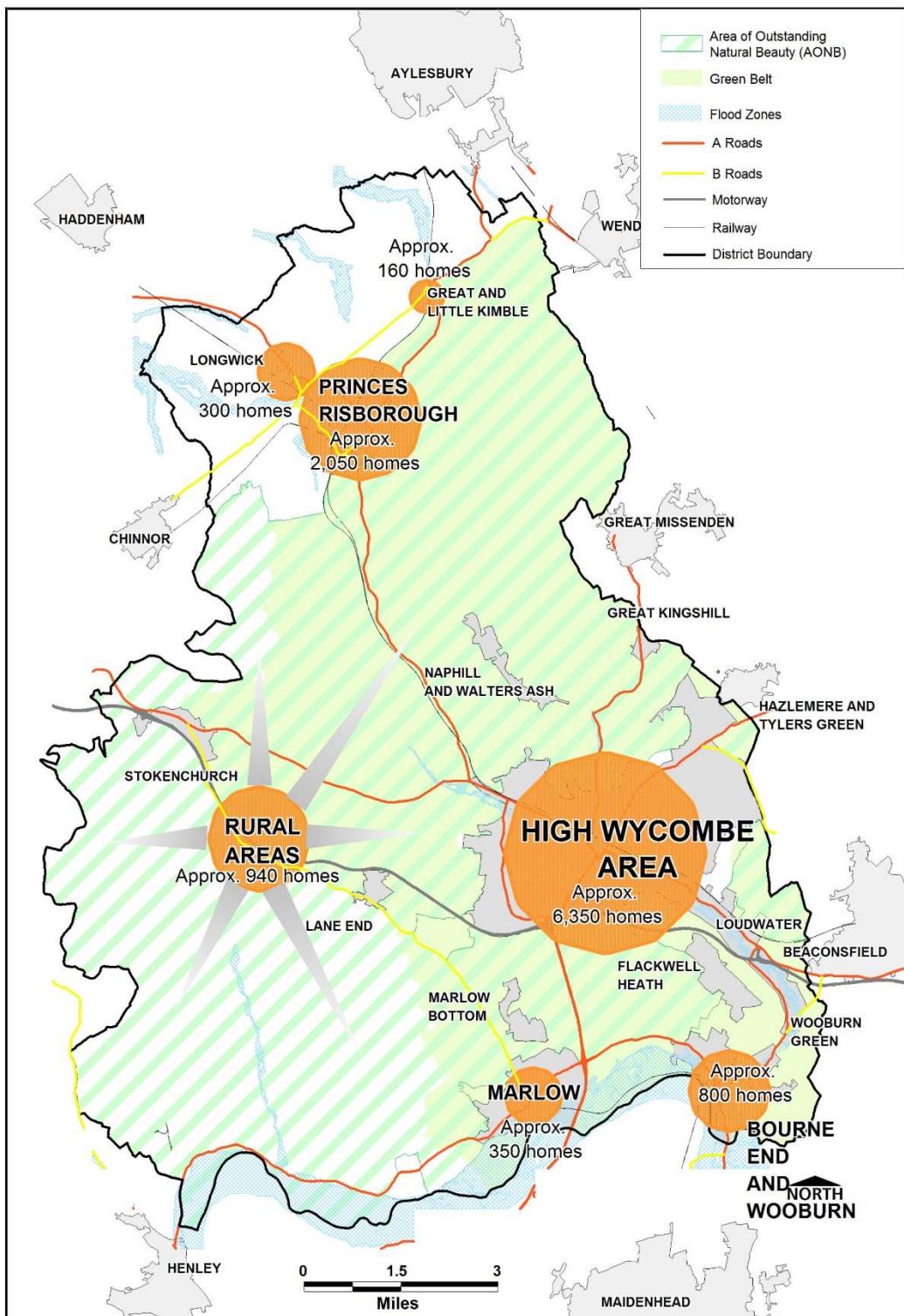
23. Work began in late 2012 on producing a new Local Plan for the District. The new Local Plan, once adopted, will replace the Core Strategy adopted in 2008 and the old Local Plan adopted in 2004. It will not replace the Delivery and Site Allocations for Town Centres (DSA) plan adopted in 2013, although some of the policies in that plan will be superseded. The two documents together – the DSA and the new Local Plan – will make up the development plan for Wycombe District (along with county wide minerals and waste plans).

24. Initial work on housing and economic needs identified that future needs were likely to be substantially higher than those in the adopted Core Strategy (8,000 homes). As the District is severely constrained by both the Chilterns AONB (70%) and the Metropolitan Green Belt (48%) the initial work considered a range of options of how needs could be met including consideration of a new settlement in the north of the District, focussing growth on transport hubs, along with maximising the use of brownfield sites, developing sites in villages and assessing the Green Belt.
25. The Council worked closely with neighbouring Buckinghamshire authorities to prepare a number of technical reports including defining the Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Area (FEMA) as the area for which needs would be assessed. This work concluded that the districts of Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and Wycombe sensibly made a single HMA and FEMA. However, Chiltern and South Bucks Councils agreed to produce a joint plan covering both districts. On that basis South Bucks was also subsequently included in the HMA and FEMA.
26. A jointly commissioned Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (with the other Buckinghamshire Districts) has identified that the Council's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for Housing is 13,200 homes and 21 ha of new land for Office and Warehouse and Distribution uses, and a reduction in the need for Industrial land of 12 ha.
27. It should be noted the government has announced that in September 2017 it intends to consult on a new methodology to calculate housing needs and that this will be applied to all Local Plans that have not been submitted for examination by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. This new methodology could result in an increase in the level of identified need that the Local Plan should be providing for and hence affect the soundness of the Local Plan that has been prepared. The recently agreed timetable for the Local Plan (the Local Development Scheme) sets out a timetable that involves the Local Plan being submitted for examination by March 2018, thereby meeting the Government deadline and enabling the Local Plan to be based under the current methodology for assessing housing need.

28. Government policy makes clear that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or where specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicate development should be restricted.
29. A Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) has been prepared based on an agreed joint methodology with the other Buckinghamshire districts; this assesses the potential supply of sites for housing and economic uses. Initial work on the HELAA identified that there was an insufficient supply of sites to meet the full OAN for housing and economic needs.
30. As a result, further work was undertaken to try to identify other sources of development land and capacity, particularly for housing. This included
  - a. re-assessing employment land to see if there were further potential sites that could meet housing needs without undermining the supply of land for jobs in the District;
  - b. jointly commissioning a Green Belt assessment with the other authorities in Buckinghamshire;
  - c. undertaking a review of sites around the main villages in the Chilterns AONB;
  - d. assessing the potential scale of expansion at Princes Risborough; and
  - e. considering the density of development across all main sites.
31. It is essential that in a constrained District such as Wycombe District, all reasonable options are considered in trying to meet the objectively assessed need for development. The HELAA process and the Sustainability Appraisal of the reasonable alternatives for meeting needs has undertaken such an assessment, and has shown the plan to be sound in this regard.
32. Following these assessments the final HELAA has identified that the housing capacity of the District is 10,925 homes for the period 2013-33 and that provision should be made for 21 ha of employment land. The work on the development capacity of the District has been shared on an ongoing basis with the other Bucks authorities and the Bucks Thames Valley LEP as part of the Duty to Cooperate dialogue. As a result the Bucks districts and the Bucks Thames Valley LEP have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that

agrees that the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan will accommodate an un-met housing need figure of 2,275 homes from Wycombe District.

33. 50% of the 10,925 homes are to be on brownfield land and in terms of distribution across the District, roughly 85% of the 10,925 homes are in the main towns: the High Wycombe area (including the surrounding villages such as Hazlemere), Princes Risborough, and Bourne End and Wooburn. Marlow also has less development than the other towns because it is constrained by Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Thames flood plain. About 15% of the homes will be in villages to help the rural economy, with Longwick and Kimble taking about a third of that development. The plan also encourages ‘rural exception sites’ – where housing is allowed in villages where development is not usually allowed, so long as it provides affordable housing for local people.
34. The Plan includes for the significant expansion of Princes Risborough. Over 2,600 homes are planned for the town and of these, about 2050 are expected to be built to 2033, including on some sites in the existing town, leaving about 600 homes for later years.
35. This is shown in figure 6 of the Local Plan, reproduced below.



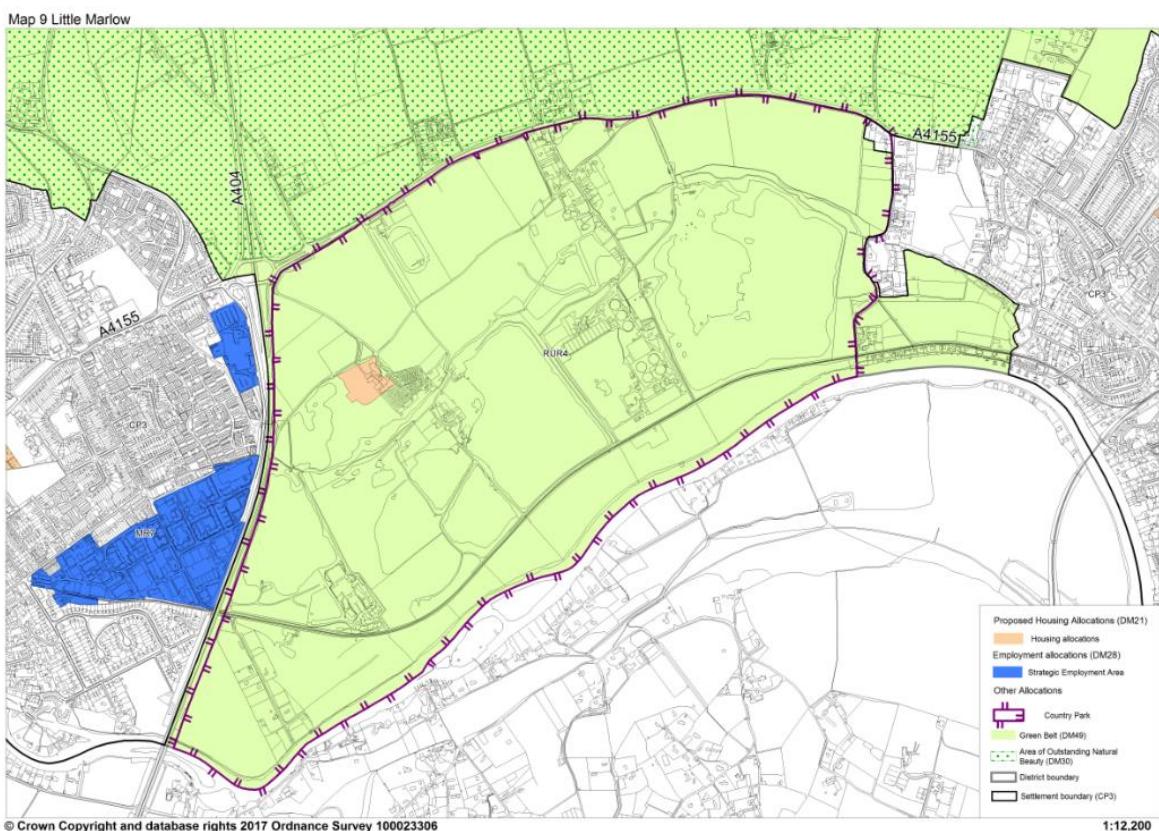
36. In relation to employment land the HELAA has identified a significant amount of land. However there is contradictory intelligence in relation to the amount of land that is forecast to be required relative to what the commercial property market is likely to deliver. Across the FEMA there is sufficient land to meet needs but there is a mismatch between the sectors forecast to grow and the uses likely to be developed in the future. In order to deal with this it is suggested that a degree of flexibility in terms of the types of employment use that are allowed on new and existing employment areas is applied and we closely monitor the demand and supply of employment land.
37. In terms of locations, the plan proposes to take an area of land out of the Green Belt at the Airpark, to allow for more business development. The Airpark would remain, with some changes to how it operates. Some small areas for business are also identified at Stokenchurch and at Princes Risborough.
38. The Council has engaged with a number of neighbouring authorities, including those beyond Buckinghamshire, and other statutory bodies, to ensure that it has met its responsibilities under the Duty to Co-operate. This has included through the production of joint assessments, agreeing joint methodologies for technical studies, sharing briefs for technical work and sharing draft reports where appropriate, as well as seeking wherever possible to agree consensus on Local Plan proposals and policy approaches.
39. The Council has met its obligations to date under the Duty to Co-operate and this is an ongoing process. This is demonstrated by progressing a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoU's), Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and confirmation from a number of authorities and bodies that there are no strategic issues that need to be considered by the Local Plan. A report setting out how the Council has undertaken the Duty to Cooperate and the outcomes of that process forms part of the evidence base accompanying the Local Plan.

40. The Council has also produced a substantial number of other technical reports including:
- Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)
  - Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)
  - Wycombe District Council Economy Study and Employment Land Review
  - Buckinghamshire Green Belt Assessment
  - Wycombe District Council Green Belt Assessment (Part Two)
  - Wycombe District Council Site Assessment Report – Sites in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
  - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 and Level 2
  - Countywide Local Plan Modelling - Phase 3 Technical Note
  - Wycombe Local Plan Sites Traffic Modelling
  - Infrastructure Development Plan
  - Wycombe District Council Viability Assessment
  - Housing Delivery Study for Buckinghamshire
  - Wycombe District Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy Study
  - Wycombe District Council Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report
  - Sustainability Appraisal
41. This and other evidence base material is a sound and proportionate basis for the allocations and policies included in the pre-submission publication version of the Local Plan that is included as Appendix 2 to this report. On the basis of this evidence, the pre-submission version of the plan is regarded as sound.

42. Members should note that the preparation of the Local Plan is itself a process of considering options and making decisions on the best options for the Local Plan. The content of the Local Plan is set out at Appendix B. In recommending the decision to proceed, publishing and submitting the Local Plan are important decisions on key options on the main issues including:
- To not seek to meet all the objectively assessed housing need in the District but for some need to be accommodated through the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan;
  - To release limited amounts of Green Belt land for housing and employment purposes;
  - To propose a major expansion of Princes Risborough including a new relief road through the development (option 11b) with a southern route running close to Culverton Farm (not along Shootacre Lane or to directly connect with Woodway);
  - To allocate some sites for housing and employment development in the AONB, but to avoid “major development” in the AONB;
  - To seek to protect the vast majority of our current employment land for employment purposes and not propose major releases for housing, in order to sustain a balance between the supply of homes and jobs.
43. On 29 August the Council received a decision on a planning appeal at Ivy Farm, at the junction of the B4009 and Longwick Road, on land identified in the plan as the rural buffer to the expanded Princes Risborough. The appeal was allowed. There are a range of options available to the Council to respond to this decision and these options would ensure that we retain a buffer between the expanded Princes Risborough and the village of Longwick. It is not necessary to delay the publication of the plan for further consideration of these options at this stage: the plan remains sound. It may be necessary to propose a modification to the plan to the Inspector when the plan is submitted, and the delegations in this report allow for this.

## **Little Marlow Lakes Country Park**

44. The 1968 Countryside Act provided power for local councils to provide country parks. The land does not need to be in their ownership, and providing for a park does not incur any financial or other obligations upon a Council. It does, however, require a clear resolution, beyond the designation of a site in a Local Plan. The area proposed to be a country park is shown on the policies map of the new Local Plan and covered by policy RUR4 – see plan below.



45. The range of recreational uses currently made by the public of the open spaces and access network within the area identified country park development already meet the principal purpose of a country park as defined by the Act i.e. *to provide or improve opportunities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public.*

46. The land that it is proposed to be provided as the Country Park is entirely within the Green Belt. It therefore has very limited development potential. Much of it is also in the flood plain, and is previous gravel workings, now lakes used for recreation and wildlife. Virtually all of the land is in private ownership. Some working arrangement between the owners will be required, probably through a Memorandum of Agreement. It is proposed that Cabinet delegates to the Head of Community, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community, the process of facilitating the delivery the country park, working with landowners and other partners as necessary.
47. In making this decision the Council is paying due regard, under the provisions of the Countryside Act 1968, to the location of the area of the park in the countryside in relation to any urban or built-up area and to the availability and adequacy of existing facilities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public.
48. The proposal for the area to be a country park was first made over a decade ago. Work on the Local Plan and Natural England has identified that Burnham Beeches – a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a National Nature Reserve and a Special Area of Conservation – is subject to increasing levels of visitor pressure.
49. In light of this the Council has secured agreement from Natural England that a satisfactory solution to this is that the Council seeks contributions to increase the accessibility to the country park to off-set impacts on Burnham Beeches.
50. Providing facilities in the park would be able to be funded through CIL, should the Council give priority to the country park in future funding cycles. Some s.106 funds may also be collected, once the Local Plan is adopted, subject to alterations the Inspector may require at examination. Some funding from s.106 contributions for improvements to access have already been secured.
51. Management arrangements need to be put in place for the Park. It is proposed this is delegated to the Head of Community Services in consultation with the Community Services Cabinet Member.
52. Once management arrangements have been put in place, bids may be able to be made to other funding organisations for improvements to the Park.

## **Community Infrastructure Levy**

53. In September 2015 Cabinet agreed to allocate 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts arising from the proposed expansion area identified in the new Local Plan to Princes Risborough Town Council for the duration of the Local Plan – ie up to 2033. This decision was made to ensure that there is appropriate local discretion in the spending of the Community Infrastructure Levy and further support the delivery of infrastructure in the town required to support the proposed growth.
54. For reasons of conformity to the existing adopted Plans, the Town Council was not able to progress a Neighbourhood Plan. Had it been in a position to do so, it would automatically have received 25% of all CIL throughout the Parish, not just within the expansion area. As there will be development outside of the expansion area it is necessary to modify the resolution to refer to all development in the Parish of Princes Risborough.
55. Longwick-cum-Ilmer Parish Council began the production of a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish in 2014. The Parish Council produced a plan but the examination required changes that undermined the purpose of the plan. As a result the Parish did not proceed with plan. The Parish has now prepared a revised plan and the District Council has published it for a 6 week consultation. In the meantime many development proposals have come forward for the Parish. It would seem to undermine trust in the planning system if, simply because of the failure of the initial plan, the Parish were to lose the additional CIL payments that are payable to a Parish with a Neighbourhood Plan in place, because developments have proceeded the plan making process. For this reason the Council will automatically transfer to the Parish the full 25% of CIL receipts, until such time as the Neighbourhood Plan is in place - when the Parish would automatically receive 25% by rights.

## **Consultation**

### *Local Plan*

56. Planning officers have undertaken a number of consultations since work on the new Local Plan started in late 2012. In winter 2012 we invited the community and stakeholders to advise us on what district wide and local issues needed to be considered in the new Local Plan as well as what sites had potential to be allocated for new development. This resulted in a range of issues and sites being identified.
57. In the summer of 2013 we organised a range of “Community Conversations” meetings across the District where we presented the general issues being raised by the new Local Plan, as well as providing a forum for the local community to raise specific issues/areas of concern for their area. Through the workshops, we discussed these issues and also looked at potential solutions in the local area. Key issues raised were the levels of housing, use of brownfield sites, infrastructure and the loss of jobs.
58. At this time we began work on assessing what the overall level of housing and economic needs for the Local Plan would be as well as considering the infrastructure requirements to accompany the levels of growth. We also continued working on compiling a list of sites that could provide housing. In early 2014 we produced an options document which was the basis for a formal consultation on the different options for the Local Plan in terms of how and where we could meet our housing needs in the new Local Plan. There was a high level of response to this consultation. The responses continued to raise similar issues to the previous consultations but also included concerns about transport impacts of new development and wider infrastructure provision, reviewing the Green Belt, the possibility of a new motorway junction on the M40 and the release of the former reserve sites for development.
59. In response we continued to work on assessing sites that could be allocated, which included a joint review of the Green Belt, assessing the sustainability and capacity of villages to accommodate development, as well as continued engagement with infrastructure providers. There was also ongoing work on the assessment of housing needs as new population information was released.

60. Because of the scale of housing need and the difficulty in meeting that need across the District, it became increasingly apparent that the Local Plan would have to consider large scale growth on the western side of Princes Risborough – an area that is not in either the Green Belt or the AONB. Detailed work and a series of local engagement activities were undertaken in Princes Risborough to determine the scale and nature of the proposals for the expansion of the town and critically the right infrastructure solution to accompany that growth. A local steering group was established, Chaired by the Town Council, to oversee the production of the Local Plan. The proposals for Princes Risborough were initially produced as a stand-alone draft Plan, in advance of the main Local Plan. The draft Local Plan was published for consultation in February 2016 which attracted significant local response.
61. In the summer of 2016 we produced a draft District-wide Local Plan setting out the development strategy and proposed allocations for new development for the remainder of the District. The response to this consultation was the highest since the old Local Plan was produced. There was a high level of objection in relation to the release of sites in the Green Belt and sites in the AONB, as well as ongoing concerns in relation to infrastructure and the impact of new development on road infrastructure.
62. The proposals for Princes Risborough have now been integrated into the District-wide Local Plan. This ensures that the proposals for the whole District can be assessed alongside one another, and the potential to accommodate the District's OAN therefore considered as a whole.
63. We have continued to ensure that the evidence supporting the allocation of sites in the Green Belt and AONB is robust, that we have optimised the housing potential of sites and that we have identified the transport impacts of the Local Plan and identified mitigation measures to help deal with them. We have also sought further confirmation in terms of the infrastructure requirements of the Local Plan.
64. In general as a result of each consultation stage we have either commissioned or undertaken more work on evidence reports as well as refined or changed policies where appropriate. One of the reports accompanying the Plan is a consultation statement that sets out the main stages of consultation, what the key issues were raised at each stage and how the Council has responded to those issues.

*Little Marlow Lakes Country Park*

65. The Little Marlow Lakes Country Park has been the subject of longstanding planning policy in the current Local Plan. Planning guidance was produced in 2002 to encourage facilitative development. A policy for the country park was included in the draft Local Plan consultation in 2016 and received support and is included in the new Local Plan.

*CIL*

66. In relation to the CIL proposals no formal consultation has been undertaken on this proposal but soundings with local members indicate strong support for this proposal.

**Options:**

*Local Plan*

67. There are two options available to Cabinet in relation to the Local Plan:
- i. **Proceed and agree the Local Plan as recommended by this report.**
68. Proceeding and agreeing to the Local Plan as recommended by this report will ensure that the Council has a new up to date Local Plan in place as soon as possible to help guide development across the District.
69. Members attention is drawn to paragraph 37 where the options contained in the plan in relation to key issues are set out.
- ii. **Make changes to the proposed Plan, which will delay the Plan.**
70. Making changes to the proposed Local Plan, which will delay the production of the Local Plan, will have serious implications. Changes will delay the plan because of the interlinked nature of the evidence base: changes would need to be brought back to a future meeting.

71. There are a number strategic decisions in the pipeline that will potentially affect the District including – Heathrow Airport expansion/3<sup>rd</sup> runway, the East West Expressway in northern Buckinghamshire, proposed changes to the NPPF in response to the Housing White Paper and the upcoming consultation on the calculation of Objectively Assessed Housing Need. In delaying the Local Plan there is a high risk that a significant amount of new work would be required to account for these forthcoming decisions that it could result in the Local Plan being delayed for a number of years.
72. This would leave the Council with no Local Plan in place and much less ability to control the location of development and leave the District at greater risk of speculative planning applications. Furthermore the Government has maintained its ability to intervene in plan production and the longer the delay the greater the risk they will intervene. Government is monitoring the progress of all Local Plans across the country.
73. In the shorter term the key risk of delay is the introduction of the new method for calculating objectively assessed housing need. If the Council does not submit the Local Plan for examination by 31st March 2018 the new methodology will apply and not only could this result in higher housing need but it could undermine the important outcomes achieved through the Duty to Cooperate process with the other Bucks authorities.

#### *Country Park*

74. There are three options available to members
  - i. To provide for the Park as recommended by this report
  - ii. To modify the boundary of the Park
  - iii. To not provide for the Park.
75. Option (i) is recommended. Option (ii) would lead to a delay in the Plan, because of the consequential changes required. Option (iii) would retain the policy proposals for the area shown on the plan above, but not 'provide' for the Park. This may lead to an objection from Natural England, and reduce future funding opportunities.

## *CIL*

76. The options on CIL in relation to Princes Risborough are:
  - i. To make 25% of CIL available from all development in the Parish, as recommended in this report
  - ii. To keep the resolution made in September 2016, that 25% of CIL will be paid from the expansion area.
77. Option (i) is recommended because had the Town Council been able to prepare a neighbourhood plan, it would have been eligible for the CIL payable in option (i).
78. The options on CIL in relation to Longwick are:
  - i. To make 25% of CIL available from all development in the Parish, until such time as the Neighbourhood Plan is in place
  - ii. To not pass on more than the 15% CIL required by the regulations until such time as the Neighbourhood Plan is in place
79. Option (i) is recommended: the Parish has been unfortunate that the first Neighbourhood Plan was not made – had it been so the Parish would be automatically receiving 25% of CIL.

## **Conclusions**

80. The production of the new Local Plan is underpinned by a substantial evidence base and this represents a sound basis for the strategy, objectives and proposals included in it – ie that the Local Plan set out at Appendix B is a sound Local Plan. The Council has worked extensively with neighbouring authorities and other organisations and has met its duty to co-operate obligations.
81. The Country Park has been a long held aspiration. The provision of the Park at this stage sits well with the Local Plan, and is included in the Plan.

82. CIL is a tariff raised on all developments. 15% of that raised in any parish is payable to the parish, and where a parish has a neighbourhood plan, that rises to 25%. The recommendations regularise the situation in relation to Princes Risborough and Longwick.

## **Next Steps**

83. Should Council resolve to publish and submit the Local Plan for examination it will be published for a 6 week consultation period in October and early November. The key issues raised by the consultation will then need to be summarised. We will identify if there are any minor modifications which could be proposed to the Local Plan in light of the consultation and other issues e.g. any changes made to the NPPF this would take the form of a schedule of proposed changes. Members should be aware that the Council cannot amend the published Local Plan, only suggest changes to the Inspector.
84. The Local Plan, along with all the responses and the evidence base and any proposed changes will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by March 2018 for examination. At this point onwards the Planning Inspectorate determine the timing, but we would expect an examination hearing into the Local Plan around June or July 2018. There may be "Main Modifications" that the Inspector proposes to the Local Plan and the Inspector will ask the Council to consult on these, on the Inspector's behalf, possibly in the autumn 2018 before issuing his/her final report, perhaps around the end of 2018. The Local Plan could be adopted in early 2019.

## **Background Papers**

There are a wide range of technical and other reports that support the proposals in the Local Plan. These are available on the Council's website.

Wycombe Local Development Scheme (August 2017).

## **Appendix 1 Main proposals contained within the Local Plan**

## **Appendix 2 New Wycombe District Local Plan**