

OFFICER DECISION RECORD SHEET

Name of decision maker: Assistant Director – Planning

Service Area: Strategic Planning

Title of Decision: To approve the decision statement for the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to Referendum.

Decision made and reasons:

Decision:

To approve the decision statement for the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to Referendum.

Reason:

The Council appointed Andrew Ashcroft BA (Hons) MA DMS, with the consent of Bovingdon Parish Council, to undertake the independent examination of the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan and to prepare a report of his findings.

Andrew Ashcroft examined the Plan by way of written representations supported by an unaccompanied site visit of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The Examiner formally submitted his Report to the Council on 21 March 2024. The Report concludes that, subject to making the modifications recommended by him, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to referendum. He also recommends that the referendum area should be the same as the designated Neighbourhood Area.

Following receipt of the Examiner's Report, legislation requires that the Council consider each of the modifications recommended, the reasons for them, and decide what action to take. The Council is also required to consider whether to extend the area to which the referendum is to take place.

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's Report and the reasons for them, the Council, with the agreement of Bovingdon Parish Council, has decided to accept all of the Examiner's recommended modifications to the draft Plan.

The next step is to progress the Neighbourhood Plan to Referendum. If the Referendum has a majority vote in favour of Dacorum Borough Council adopting the Neighbourhood Plan (i.e. for it being 'made'), it can then proceed to Cabinet and Full Council for their approval before the Council can adopt it.

Reports considered:

Examiner's Report into the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders Consulted:

Sara Whelan; Ronan Leydon; Francis Whittaker; Mark Brookes

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Financial Comments:

Work on this has already started. Invoice from examiners for £5,326 pending payment with other external payments anticipated. There is also DBC staff time required. Any external financial assistance will help alleviate the final cost.

Darren Flanagan, Accountant for People & Place

Monitoring Officer Comments:

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 requires the local planning authority to outline what action to take in response to the recommendations of the examiner. The Council has considered the recommendations and decided to accept all the recommendations and the Plan will now proceed to referendum. The decision statement will legally confirm this position.

S151 Officers Comments:

The council have a statutory requirement to work with and support those neighbourhoods undertaking neighbourhood plans. The costs to date for this project are minimal and are funded through the wider planning budgets, from this point in the project external DLUHC funding is available to support the next stages.

Implications:

Value for Money:

- The decision represents a legal step in the progression of the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan towards referendum. As such, there is no value for money arising from this.

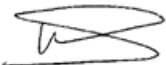
Financial:

- On sign-off of the decision, the Strategic Planning team will be able to secure £20,000 in grant funding from DLUHC for progressing the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan to the referendum stage.

Risk: If the decision statement is not agreed.

Failure to progress the decision statement will result in the Bovingdon Neighbourhood Plan being unable to progress towards Referendum and likely subsequent adoption by the Council. This would result in Dacorum not receiving the grant funding as set out above. It would also likely result in reputational damage to the Council for its failure to enact its legal duties with regard to the next steps for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Officer Signature:



Date: 16.04.2024

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