

Part I
For Decision

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
CABINET – 6 AUGUST 2019

Recommendation from the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 1 August 2019:-

HOUSING DELIVERY TEST ACTION PLAN

Members considered a report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) on the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires councils to prepare an action plan where housing delivery has fallen below the housing requirement. The plan seeks to identify the main issues associated with housing delivery in the Borough and the main actions that can be taken by the Council and other parties to speed up delivery.

The Plan reviews Government guidance, considers the views of relevant stakeholders and analyses existing data and other knowledge in order to identify a series of actions that would be taken over the coming months and years to help increase housing delivery.

A number of questions were raised in terms of the length of the planning application determination process/timescales and build out rates, time taken for construction to commence, scope for technology and modernisation of the application process and pre-application advice.

The Panel requested changes to the key action points in the report at paragraph 3.6 and the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. Following a detailed discussion the amendments were agreed as below:

At para 3.6 needs to state:

- Progress the adoption of the Local Plan.
- Review the scope for technology and modernisation to improve pre-application advice and the handling of planning applications.

The Housing Delivery Test Action Plan for Cabinet on 6 Aug to be updated with the following:

- It is intended that results will be reported to Councillors later in 2019 and that examination hearing sessions will take place in December 2019 and February 2020. This should lead to main modifications consultation and adoption later in 2020.
- Reference to adoption of the Local Plan but removal of words relating to the release of land from the green belt as this has not yet been confirmed through the examination process.

- The Council will explore the scope for technology and modernisation to improve the provision of pre-application advice and the handling of planning applications. Officers are aware of IT applications for example that make it easier to potential applicants to understand whether their proposal is permitted development, whether they require planning permission and what information needs to be submitted in order to make their application valid.

RESOLVED

1. That the Panel agrees the Action Plan and the series of actions within the action plan that the Council will seek to implement over coming months and years.
2. That the Action Plan be presented to Cabinet for information.