

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY

TITLE: CONSULTATION ON THE UPDATED FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	31st May 2023
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Regeneration and Culture
Key Decision	Yes
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

This report seeks authority to consult on an updated Financial Contributions for Schools Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Council Plan priority

Learning Barnsley and Growing Barnsley

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

- 1. gives approval to consult on the updated Financial Contributions to Schools Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The Local Plan, adopted on 3rd January 2019, contains policies to be considered when determining planning applications. Supplementary Planning Documents contain further advice and explain how Local Plan policies will be applied.
- 1.2** The Planning & Building Control Service monitors the effectiveness of our policies and guidance on an ongoing basis. In respect of Supplementary Planning Documents, this is to satisfy ourselves that:
 - They remain in conformity with national legislation, planning policy and guidance

- They are helping to ensure that the Local Plan achieves its overall aims and objectives
- They are enabling decisions to be upheld at appeal
- They reflect any new social, environmental or economic priorities that may have arisen

1.3 Supplementary Planning Documents build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. As they do not form part of the development plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. They are however a material consideration in decision-making. They should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.

1.4 As they do not form part of the Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents can be more readily updated but in doing so, the comments received will be fully considered to ensure that the amendments conform with national planning policy and guidance and that the content supplements existing policies in the plan (rather than replacing them or going beyond their remit) and that the amendments will not result in unnecessary financial burdens.

1.5 A number of Supplementary Planning Documents were adopted following the adoption of the Local Plan. The Financial Contributions for Schools SPD was adopted on 23rd May 2019. The amendments proposed are to provide updates, improvements and clarity on the scope of the SPD, including a change to the title. Once adopted, the amended SPD will supersede the version adopted in 2019.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 It is proposed that the Financial Contributions for Schools SPD is amended. The amendments proposed are to provide updates, improvements and clarity on the scope of the SPD, including a change to the title. The full document is contained in Appendix 1 showing changes with new text in red and underlined, and deleted text struck through.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

Financial implications arising from this report are related to

- Minimal costs associated with the adoption process which involves placing a public notice in the press. These minimal costs will be met from the existing planning budget.
- Updated calculations for financial contributions for educational provision as set out in paragraphs 6.8 to 6.10.

3.2 Legal

Preparation, consultation and adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents is carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012.

3.3 Equality

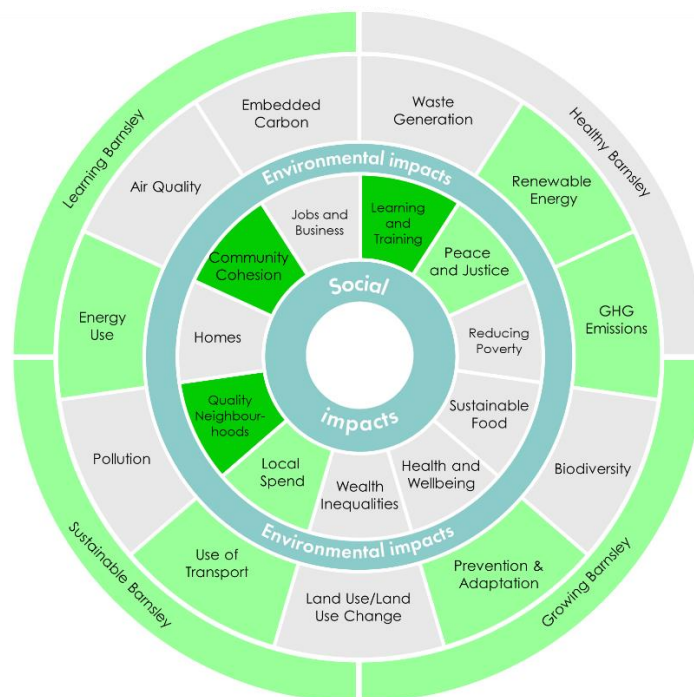
Full Equality Impact Assessment completed.

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out to support the Local Plan. This concluded that all policies and proposals apply to all sectors of the community equally.

A further assessment was carried out when the suite of SPD's was adopted in 2019. This recognised key impacts around providing translation and interpretation assistance to those individuals that require it to help them understand the SPD's. An action for future consultation was to arrange targeted consultation such as face to face meetings with the equality forums as appropriate, relevant to the subject of the SPD, to ensure our engagement is inclusive. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments will be considered at venues where documents are available to ensure accessibility requirements for all attendees are met. This can be carried out during consultation on the draft.

The changes proposed to the Financial Contributions to Schools SPD seek to provide clarity on how financial contributions to educational provision can include provision for early years and SEND and thereby contribute to a more inclusive educational offer for Barnsley's communities.

3.4 Sustainability



As this report concerns updates to an existing SPD, it is considered that in most instances the report has low positive or no impact. Positive impacts

arise mostly from the purpose of the SPD, to ensure that pupils arising from new development can be accommodated locally within the appropriate educational setting, and the proposed changes to provide clarity on what financial contributions to educational provision may be spent on within the borough.

3.5 Employee

There are no employee implications arising from this report.

3.6 Communications

Communications support will be required to publicise the consultation through press releases, social media, council newsletter and consultation hub.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has taken place internally with the officers who act on behalf of teams responsible for providing input into planning applications relevant to the Financial Contributions to Schools SPD. This has included officers in Education Services.

4.2 Public consultation will take place for a period of a minimum of four weeks in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) regulations, 2012. This will include relevant external stakeholders from the early years and education sector. Comments will be considered, and a further report will be taken to Cabinet detailing any changes made as a result of consultation and seeking authority to adopt the final versions.

4.3 The full document is contained in Appendix 1 showing changes with new text in red and underlined, and deleted text struck through.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 An alternative approach is not to update the current supplementary planning document. This would mean that guidance provided to the public and developers would be out of date and unclear with respect of the new school planning areas as approved by the Department for Education, and the use of financial contributions for early years and SEND provision.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Financial Contributions for Schools SPD is amended. The amendments proposed are to provide updates, improvements and clarity on the scope of the SPD, including a change to the title. The updated document will be used to provide up to date information and guidance on how planning policies will be applied and interpreted.

6.2 The key updates and reasons for them are summarised below.

Scope of the SPD

- 6.3** The changes proposed to the title and scope of the SPD seek to provide clarity on how financial contributions to educational provision can include provision for early years and SEND and thereby contribute to a more inclusive educational offer for Barnsley's communities. As such it is proposed that the title of the SPD is changed to 'Financial Contributions for Educational Provision'.
- 6.4** The current SPD provides a process for ensuring that new developments come forward in line with Local Plan Policy I1 Infrastructure and Planning Obligations, with particular reference to any ensure that developments contribute to meet relevant education infrastructure requirements as necessary. The current focus on the SPD is on the provision of school places and the conditions of the existing school buildings. It is intended to update the SPD in line with national and local policy to clarify that in relation to educational facilities, appropriate infrastructure can include the capacity of early years and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision.
- 6.5** It is clear from the Council's sufficiency strategies that there is a demonstrable need for additional early years and SEND provision within the borough. However, we are aware that in the current economic climate with particular reference to post-Covid recovery and the subsequent cost of living crisis that there are increasing financial burdens on those seeking to bring development forward, including the rise of building costs, levelling of house prices and forthcoming changes to Building Regulations which will see an increased financial cost to meet higher sustainability standards. This is also a factor affecting the current provision of educational facilities, particularly within the early years sector, and the issue of rising building cost is one which also affects the Council when making the required changes and improvements to existing educational infrastructure.
- 6.6** The updates to the SPD recognise these increasing financial pressures by taking account of the latest evidence base and demonstrated need without unreasonably increasing the financial burden. The intention is to update the SPD taking account of early years and SEND capacity, updating the figures used to calculate financial contributions to reflect increased costs per pupil place, to update the number of pupils generated using more recent pupil census data and comparative analysis of pupils that have actually arisen from representative developments across the borough. These figures will be reviewed regularly in line with government guidance.
- 6.7** However, to ensure the cumulative impacts of this Supplementary Planning Document do not undermine the ability to meet the full suite of policy requirements, we will not expect a contribution for early years or SEND provision over and above the contributions sought for primary and secondary provision. Instead, should projections show that adequate primary and secondary spaces are expected to be available for the remainder of the plan period within the relevant school place planning area, an assessment will then be undertaken to establish if there is a need for early years or SEND provision, which would help cater for demand arising from future occupants

of the application site. In such a scenario, the contribution that would ordinarily have been sought for primary and or secondary provision would instead be directed towards the necessary early years and/or SEND provision.

Calculating contributions

6.8 It is proposed to update the figures used to calculate financial contributions in line with Government guidance and the latest evidence base. As set out in the current SPD, the Government recommends using the latest Local Authority Scorecard as a basis of the cost per pupil place. The current SPD uses the 2017 scorecard as the basis for primary places and the costs incurred on a local secondary school development at the time as the basis of cost per secondary school place. It is proposed to update the document using the latest available scorecard for 2021 for both primary and secondary places for consistency.

6.9 Table 1 below shows the existing SPD cost per pupil place, the most recent 2021 scorecard figure, the proposed updated figure and the costs incurred on more recent school developments in Barnsley. The associated increase in cost shown in both the 2021 scorecard and the costs incurred in local school developments are reflective of the nationwide increase in materials and building costs. The proposed figure for the updated SPD is based on the 2021 scorecard rounded to the nearest £500. Table 1 shows that this is comparable to the costs incurred on local school development, which in the case of the primary school figure, is indicative, as works are ongoing.

6.10 It should be noted that if building costs continue to rise then there is a risk that this calculation will soon become out of date so requires revising periodically to ensure contributions given can feed into wider plans in funding extra educational setting requirements.

Table 1: Cost per pupil place

School type	Cost per pupil place			
	Current SPD	2021 scorecard	Proposed updated figure	Costs incurred on local school development (2022/23)
Primary	£16, 202	£18, 832	£19, 000	£18, 680
Secondary	£16, 056	£18, 625	£18, 500	£17, 014

Number of pupils generated

6.12 The current SPD calculates the number of pupils a development will bring as follows:

- Primary school pupils - 21 pupils per 100 homes
- Secondary school pupils – 15 pupils per 100 homes

These figures have been arrived at using information from the school census 2015. It is proposed to update these figures based on updated school census data.

School planning areas

- 6.13** School planning areas are used as the starting point for deciding whether contributions for educational provision are required arising from a development. Financial contributions will be determined and spent on settings local to the new development. The Department for Education approved new primary school planning areas for Barnsley in early 2023. It is proposed to update the table in 'Section 10 How we determine if a school is local to a development' of the SPD to reflect the new school planning areas.

7. GLOSSARY

SPD: Supplementary Planning Document

NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework

NPPG: National Planning Policy Guidance

SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

8. LIST OF APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Draft SPD document

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Plan <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/17249/local-plan-adopted.pdf>

Current Financial Contributions for Schools SPD

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/15710/financial-contributions-to-schools-spd.pdf>

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Senior Financial Services officer consulted <i>Ashley Gray</i>
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted <i>Bob Power</i>

Report author: Emma Coveney

Post: Senior Planning Officer

Date: 2nd January 2023