

Title of Report:	Adoption of Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 - 2016	Item 12
Report to be considered by:	Executive	
Forward Plan Ref:	CO854	

Corporate Plan Priority:	S9 – Enhancing the sustainability of the West Berkshire Community and preserving the local environment through improving environmental resource management.
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Corporate Plan priority by: providing a planning framework which is a statutory requirement and relevant to many priorities.	

Purpose of Report: To ensure the new Structure Plan is adopted

Recommended Action: To recommend to Council that the Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 (Appendix 12 of this report) is formally adopted and that the date of adoption is 10 December 2004

Reason for decision to be taken: To provide an up to date and relevant development plan

List of other options considered: None

Key background documentation:

- Proposed Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 - 2016

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Implications

Policy: As part of the adopted development plan the Structure Plan will be the primary consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 has been in preparation for the last few years. Its role is to replace the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 – 2006, which was adopted in 1995 and set out the strategic planning framework for Berkshire up to 2016.
- 1.2 This is the first Structure Plan to have been produced since Berkshire County Council was abolished and the new unitary authorities were established. The process has been overseen throughout by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee which comprises members of all six of the Berkshire Unitaries and is chaired by Councillor Longton of West Berkshire.
- 1.3 The key stages which the Plan has passed through are summarised in the table below:-

Public consultation	Public consultation on the issues was undertaken in the summer of 2000.
Deposit	The draft plan was placed on public deposit in March 2002, the text having first been agreed by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Berkshire Unitary Councils. A total of 1263 statements of objection or support for the plan were received from 170 individuals and organisations.
Examination	An independent panel appointed by the Secretary of State undertook an examination in public of the plan in September 2003.
Panel Report	The Panel's report was published in December 2003. It was largely supportive of the approach set out in the draft plan and agreed with the overall housing numbers and distribution which the unitary councils had proposed. (The Panel also agreed with West Berkshire's minority report which had suggested some minor changes to the approach to housing densities – Policy H6)
Modifications	The Joint Strategic Planning Committee considered the Panel's report in February 2004 and agreed to place proposed modifications on deposit for public comment during March 2004. There was a total of 174 objections and representations in support.
Adoption	The Joint Strategic Planning Committee considered objections to the proposed modifications in July 2004, but did not consider that any further material changes needed to be made to the plan. It recommended that the plan should be formally adopted by each of the Berkshire Unitaries.

- 1.4 In accordance with the Joint Committee's recommendation it is now proposed that West Berkshire Council should formally adopt the Structure Plan.

2. Next Stages

- 2.1 During October the full Councils of each Berkshire Unitary Authority are being asked to recommend that the Structure Plan is adopted on Friday 10 December 2004. Assuming that these resolutions are made, a notice will be published in Berkshire newspapers saying that the Councils intend to adopt the Structure Plan on a date after the 3 December 2004 (the publication and wording of the notice of intention to adopt is as required by the development plan regulations). On 10 December the plan will become adopted. Early in the new year further notices will be published in local papers and in the London Gazette confirming that the plan has been adopted. This will mark the beginning of the six week period during which a legal challenge can be mounted by any persons aggrieved by the plan and who questions its validity.

3. Implications

- 3.1 On adoption of the 2001 – 2016 plan, the 1991 - 2006 Structure Plan will be replaced and will no longer be a material consideration in planning decisions. As part of the development plan the new Structure Plan will become, along with the West Berkshire District Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans the first consideration in the determination of planning applications as required by planning legislation. The new Structure Plan will also be a central consideration in the preparation of the Council's new local development framework.

Appendices

Appendix 12 - Proposed Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 *(due to the size of the document a copy can be obtained on request from Anne Hunter (01635 519241) and a copy will be held in the Members' Room)*

Consultation Responses

Local Stakeholders:	Consultation has occurred throughout the process in accordance with the Development Plan regulations.
Officers Consulted:	N/A
Trade Union:	N/A