

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK : UPDATE REPORT OCTOBER 2009

Report By: Head of Planning and Transportation

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To advise Members of the progress with the Local Development Framework and the programme for Member Briefings and Consultations on the emerging Core Strategy.

Financial Implications

2. The costs of the Local Development Framework are currently being covered from a combination of base budget and Growth Point funding.

Background

- 3 The 2004 reforms to the planning system require local planning authorities to replace old-style development plans with Local Development Frameworks. In the case of Herefordshire that means replacing the Unitary Development Plan with the set of Development Plan Documents set out in the Local Development Scheme. Notably there will be three such documents at the centre of the Local Development Framework: the Core Strategy which sets out the overarching development strategy for the County, and two documents to set out detailed allocations: the Hereford Area Plan and the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan. The first of these, the Core Strategy, is due to be the subject of a final round of public consultation early in the new year. The purpose of this report to give Planning Committee advance warning of key dates for Member involvement as well as set out some of the main features of the emerging document.
- 4 The consultation version of the Core Strategy must comply with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and hence the separate report on this agenda about the Panel Report on the Regional Spatial Strategy is directly relevant.

Progress with the Core Strategy up to October 2009

- 5 The Core Strategy has to look forward to the year 2026 and has, at its heart, the Vision and Objectives with that in mind, in addition to the Regional Spatial Strategy the Core Strategy must also sit comfortably with the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy for which the Herefordshire Partnership Board has responsibility.
- 6 Thus the new planning system requires that the Core Strategy:
 - complies with the regional policies (as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy)
 - is backed up with evidence for the choices it makes
 - has had the full involvement of the local communities it is intended to serve

- meets other legal tests such as a the need for a Sustainability Assessment and a Habitat Regulations Assessment
- 7 The policies in Herefordshire's Core Strategy will need to cover such issues as the distribution of new housing, employment and commercial development, policies to cover the location of "social infrastructure" such as schools and health facilities, and deal with such generic matters as transportation, minerals, waste and climate change,
- 8 In order to take these issues forward the Council has published a series of evidence studies and background papers on the website. These include:
- Evidence Studies:**
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
 - West Midlands Housing Market Area Assessment
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study
 - Employment Land Review
 - Retail Study
 - Green Infrastructure Study
 - Open Space Study
 - Transport Study
 - Minerals and Waste Study
 - Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment
 - Characterisation Study
- These are updated and posted on the Council's website as they become available
- Background Papers**
- Settlement Hierarchy
 - Analysis of Parish and Town Plans
 - Cross Boundary Report
 - Vision and Objectives
 - Climate Change
 - Spatial Strategy
- These too are updated and posted on the website as soon as they are available. The background papers each have their own programme of public consultations.
- 9 The relevant section of the Council's website is **www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf**
- 10 The Developing Options consultation in the summer of 2008 produced around 1,000 responses of the public and other interested people/organisations to the general direction of the Core Strategy. The results are on the website.

The Next Stage

- 11 The evidence base will soon be substantially complete. Notable recent additions to the reports on the website include the Multi Modal Model (Transportation Study) and the Water Cycle Study. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Study is due to be published by the end of October, along with a viability study to look at the viability of Affordable Housing targets.
- 12 The scene is now set to carry out the final set-piece public engagement in the process – this will be the "Placeshaping" Consultation which will help the Council to refine its policy choices. The Placeshaping Consultation documents will be the subject of Member Briefings in the next few weeks and will be reported to Cabinet on 26th November to seek formal approval for public consultations in January, February and March 2010.

- 13 Once the Placeshaping Consultation Results have been analysed the Council will then prepare the Core Strategy itself, initially to publish as a document for submission to the Secretary of State. This is expected to happen towards the end of 2010.
- 14 In advance of the report to Cabinet it is proposed to hold a series of Member Briefings so that Members have the chance to discuss the emerging policy choices with officers. For the sake of convenience it is proposed that these briefings take place immediately after the next three Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings, albeit not part of the formal business of those meetings.
- 15 The intended programme for the remainder of 2009/2010 is thus:
 23rd October: today's report to Planning Committee
 28th October Member Briefing following Southern Area Planning Committee
 11th November Member Briefing following Central Area Planning Committee
 18th November Member Briefing following Northern Area Planning Committee
 26th November Cabinet Meeting to consider and authorise the consultation.
 18th January 2010 to 12th March 2010, 8 week period of public consultation.
- 16 Following analysis of the results of the consultation (and the final adoption of the latest revisions to Regional Spatial Strategy) it is anticipated that the "Pre-submission" version of the Core Strategy will be presented to Planning Committee, Cabinet and full Council later in 2010 for consideration and approval as the Council's preferred policy. That will be the document which has to be submitted to the Secretary of State, who will then hold a Public Examination and, following the Inspector's Report, the amended document will become the adopted Core Strategy and a statutory Development Plan Document.

The Placeshaping Paper

- 17 The document which will be the subject of the consultation will have the following basic format:

Section 1	Introduction and How to Comment
Section 2	Background – outlining the documents and processes which have happened to date
Section 3	The Key Characteristics of the County
Section 4	The Vision and Objectives for the LDF and Core Strategy
Section 5	The Spatial Strategy – setting out how much development there will be and broadly where it will go.
Section 6	Place Shaping Policies – this section will be split into places (Hereford, each of the Market Towns, and then the rural areas) and will highlight the issues for each of these places and identify possible options for the implementation of the Core Strategy.
Section 7	General policies, to cover such generic policy matters as renewable energy, flood risk, minerals and waste, etc. etc.
Section 8	Delivery and Monitoring – setting out how the plan is intended to be developed and its outcomes monitored.
Section 9	Next steps – explaining what will happen in order to take the Core Strategy forward as the overarching strategy, and what is anticipated of the two subsequent plans for Hereford and for the Market Towns and Rural Areas.

- 18 It is anticipated that the first drafts of the document will be available for discussion at the Member Briefings as proposed to be scheduled (see paragraph 15 above).

RECOMMENDATION

THAT;

The report be noted, subject to any comments Members may wish to make to the Cabinet Member, Environment.