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| <b>MEETING:</b>         | <b>CABINET</b>   |
| <b>DATE:</b>            | <b>26 NOVEMBER 2009</b>  |
| <b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b> | <b>LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK –<br/>CONSULTATION ON THE CORE STRATEGY</b> |
| <b>PORTFOLIO AREA:</b>  | <b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; STRATEGIC HOUSING</b>                                 |

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

To approve the “Place Shaping Paper” as a consultation document on the emerging Core Strategy, and to agree an outline of the consultation arrangements.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

### **Recommendation(s)**

#### **THAT Cabinet**

- (a) **approve the Place Shaping Paper as a consultation document on the emerging Core Strategy, Hereford Plan and Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan;**
- (b) **delegate to the Head of Planning and Transportation (in consultation with the Cabinet Member) any further minor text changes; and**
- (c) **agree to the outline consultation details, including the dates for the formal consultation period of Monday 18 January 2010 to Friday 12 March 2010.**

### **Key Points Summary**

- The Council is committed to the preparation of the Local Development Framework to replace the Unitary Development Plan as part of the Council’s Policy Framework
- The first element of the Local Development Framework to be prepared is the Core Strategy which will set out the Council strategic planning policies for the period

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Peter Yates, Planning Policy Manager on (01432) 261952

2006 to 2026

- The approved Local Development Scheme sets out the proposed timetable and is a statutory document having been approved (annually) by the Secretary of State
- The Core Strategy has been the subject of two previous rounds of public consultation: the Issues Paper in 2007 and the Developing Options Paper in 2008
- This next round of consultation is titled the “Place Shaping Paper” and will set out the main options for the strategic planning policies of the County. The Place Shaping Paper is based on a series of evidence based reports, background papers and the results of the previous rounds of consultations. The publication of the paper also presents the opportunity to undertake an issues consultation for the preparation of the other Development Plan Documents in the Local Development Scheme, namely the Hereford Plan and the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan
- It is proposed to set the consultation period from 18<sup>th</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – a series of consultation events are planned.
- Cabinet approval is sought for the content of the document as a **consultation** document, and to approve the consultation dates
- There will be further reports to Cabinet in due course as the final set of policies are developed for consideration by Council.

## Alternative Options

- 1 The Council is committed to the preparation of the Local Development Framework with the elements and timetable set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme as approved by the Government Office for the West Midlands (on behalf of the Secretary of State). The first element of the Local Development Framework, namely the Core Strategy, is the subject of this consultation paper. The only alternative would be to delay the consultation to investigate significant changes to the document as presented to this meeting.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 To progress this element of the Local Development Framework

## Introduction and Background

- 3 The Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2007 and guides development in the County. It is part of the Council’s Policy Framework as set out in the Council’s Constitution. It is, however, of a limited lifespan, having a plan period which ends in 2011. It is due to be replaced by the Local Development Framework, the elements of which were approved by Cabinet most recently in the Local Development Scheme which was adopted by Cabinet at their meeting in January 2009. The first element in the Local Development Framework to be prepared is the **Core Strategy** which will set out the overall strategic planning policies for the County for the period 2006 to 2026.
- 4 The plan preparation process requires at least one more formal consultation period before policies can be prepared. This will be the third round of consultations following the Issues and Options Paper in 2007 and the Developing Options Paper in 2008. The consultation which is the subject of this report is titled the “**Place Shaping Paper**”. It

sets out a series of options for policies based on a series of evidence reports and studies, and the responses of the public and other interested parties and organisation to the earlier rounds of consultation. The report seeks authority to progress this major round of public consultation, after which the results will be analysed and further reports will be made back to Cabinet to develop the actual policies which will, in due course, become the Core Strategy.

- 5 The Local Development Scheme also includes two more detailed Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which will be prepared in the County: Hereford Plan and the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan. These documents will include site allocations and any other locally important policies and proposals. The publication of the Place Shaping Paper allows for the Issues consultation stage in the preparation of these documents to be combined with taking the Core Strategy forward. Therefore the paper includes details of locally important issues and the questionnaire accompanying the paper will aim to gather other issues to be taken into account in preparing the other DPDs

## Key Considerations

- 6 The Place Shaping Paper has the following sections:

**Section 2:** Background to the paper *outlines the documents and processes which have happened to date*

**Section 3:** Characteristics of the county – Key facts, *this provides a set of key statistics/ facts and a map which will form the spatial portrait for the Core Strategy. A draft spatial portrait can be viewed on the website.*

**Section 4:** Vision and Objectives – *this section sets out the vision for the Core Strategy and the objectives to achieve that vision*

**Section 5:** Spatial Strategy – *this section sets out how much development there will be and broadly where it will go.*

**Section 6:** Place Shaping policies - *this section is split into places (Hereford, each of the market towns and the rural areas) and will highlight the issues for each of these places and identify possible options for the implementation of the Spatial Strategy.*

**Section 7:** General Core policies – *This section is intended to convey the preferred approach for each of the Core policy areas, where they have been established. The final wording of the policies will be contained within the pre-submission Core Strategy.*

**Section 8:** Delivery and Monitoring - *provides information on delivery and how proposals and policies intend to be monitored.*

**Section 9:** Next Steps – *explains the remaining progress for preparing the Core Strategy and the Hereford Area Plan and the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan.*

- 7 In sections 5, 6 and 7, a reasoned justification is provided to explain why a particular preferred approach has been proposed and why, having been considered, other alternative approaches have been rejected.

- 8 It is proposed, subject to approval by Cabinet, to proceed to proofing and printing through December so that a finally published consultation paper is ready for the launch date of the consultation on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January. The eight week consultation period will continue to 12<sup>th</sup> March.
- 9 The consultation techniques will include a launch event planned for The Courtyard on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January for 10.00 am to 2.00 pm, and the use of the Council's promotional trailer at various locations and dates around the County including High Town on Saturday 13 February. In order to engage with young people workshops are being arranged with Bishops School Hereford, the Folly Lane Campus and Holme Lacy College in the centre of the County and Kingstone High and Queen Elizabeth High. These events will take place during February and March Initial enquiries are underway to have a workshop event with the Hereford Young Farmers. In order to engage with businesses an exhibition is being planned at Evans Easy Space in Rotherwas. A variety of other events are being planned around the County, and briefing meetings can be arranged with Town and groups of Parish Councils where practical. Various public notices will be published and media releases prepared. Copies of the papers will be deposited in all libraries and info offices and publicity material such as posters will be prepared and distributed across the County, including to all Parish Councils. In addition the next edition of Herefordshire Matters will contain details of the consultation. Suggestions from Ward Members for means to engage the communities in their words would be welcomed and accommodated where resources allow. The questionnaire will be available on-line and participation encouraged through the "Have Your Say" community involvement and consultation page of the Council's website.
- 10 Following completion of the consultation period the responses will need to be analysed and proposed policies developed under the initial guidance of the Local Development Framework Task Group. Later in 2010 the proposed policies will have to be tested through Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Appraisal before being presented first to Cabinet and then to Council for approval as the 'Submission Document'. The document then has to be publicised and then submitted to the Secretary of State who will arrange for a Public Examination, followed by an Inspector's Report and, finally, adoption (anticipated in 2011).

## **Community Impact**

- 11 The Local Development Framework will become the spatial element of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy. There is a Local Development Framework Task Group comprising Cabinet members, Members of the minority political groups, and representatives of the Herefordshire Partnership who have advised and guided the preparation of the document. Close links exist within and between the directorates of the Council to ensure that the policies in the Local Development Framework will help to deliver the Council's wider objectives.

## **Financial Implications**

- 12 The research which supports the document and other work has been funded from a combination of base budget, Growth Point Funding and the final round of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Budget provision exists or is programmed for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 and after that will need to be the subject of normal budget review processes.

## Legal Implications

- 13 There are no legal issues raised by the report.

## Risk Management

- 14 The principal risks to the preparation of the Local Development Framework will come when the documents within it are subject to Public Examination in due course. Before being adopted such planning policy documents must be found "Sound" and amongst the "Tests of Soundness" are the requirement that policy documents be securely based on good evidence and have been the subject of public scrutiny and involvement. This element of risk is managed specifically by following the processes set out in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation proposed in this report follows the required procedures in the Statement of Community Involvement.

## Consultees

- 15 All Members of the Council will have been provided with an early copy of the consultation document (following the Area Planning Sub-Committee meetings on 28 October, 11 November and 18 November respectively). Several of the Background Papers which have provided the evidence base have themselves been the subject of their own consultation process. The document itself will be the subject of consultation before further reports are brought to Cabinet.

## Appendices

- 16 The draft Place Shaping Paper is itself the appendix to this report will have been provided to Members under separate cover in advance of the meeting.

## Background Papers

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### **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

### **Background Papers**

- Settlement Hierarchy
- Analysis of Parish and Town Plans
- Cross Boundary Report
- Vision and Objectives
- Climate Change
- Spatial Strategy