

DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT NOTES: PPS11 REGIONAL PLANNING AND PPS12 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Report By: Chief Forward Planning Officer

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

1. To inform the Committee of the proposals contained in PPS11 on Regional Planning and PPS12 on Local Development Frameworks.

Financial Implications

2. None directly from PPS11, however, the delivery of Local Development Frameworks will impinge upon staff costs within Forward Planning.

Introduction

3. The Office of The Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has produced the draft version of PPS11 and PPS12. These documents are part of a series being published by the Government to consult on the detail of its planning reform agenda. It is the Government's intention that this PPS and guidance contained in the annexes should replace PPG11: *Regional Planning* and PPG12: *Development Plans*.

Summary of Draft PPS11

4. The main principles of Draft PPS11 seek to give more weight to what is currently Regional Policy Guidance (RPG) by replacing it with a statutory Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The key distinction between RPG and RSS is that the RPG although provided for in government guidance is not a statutory element of the plan making process. The RSS seeks to give more weight to regional planning guidance by strengthening its statutory purpose. The RSS will become an integral part of the statutory development planning process and therefore subject to Section 54A and the requirement to determine applications in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The RSS will as result become less focussed on land use issues and more focussed on implementation and integration with the actions and strategies of other agencies. It will in addition be subject to an annual monitoring report, which can identify any required remedial action. The RSS does not, however, seek to address local issues or be site specific; these issues are subject to the local development document.
5. The RSS seeks to ensure future changes are produced on an inclusive basis of partnership working and community involvement. Better integration with other strategies is also a priority, along with a focus on delivery; making it clear what is to be done, by when and by whom.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from C Brace on (01432) 383034

6. The RSS has the following main features:
- A Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) as an integral part of the RSS
 - The holding of an examination-in-public (EIP) into the draft revision of the RSS
 - More developed community involvement in the RSS process with a commitment to inclusiveness

Analysis of Implications

7. Herefordshire's problems must be covered by key points within the RSS, even though local development documents cover local and site-specific issues. A potential weakening of power of Herefordshire, as a local authority, should be avoided.
8. There is a serious concern that the voice of Herefordshire and its stakeholders, at regional level, may be overlooked due to population disparity and strength of voice against those from the major conurbations. Community involvement, although essential and welcome, scaled across the regional level, will represent issues and may result in policy and strategy of no relation to that of Herefordshire or issues of relevance to this county not being addressed.
9. Herefordshire Council, in regard to issues such as housing, will be better placed to establish targets than the regional planning body.
10. Arrangements for the Examination-In-Public to be held at different locations across the region is important to Herefordshire, where the ability to travel to main centres are more difficult. Opportunities for stakeholder involvement in the process should be sought.
11. The timetable set out leaves under 2 years for the preparation of RSS. This timeframe is very tight considering the transitional processes required, along with the need to co-ordinate across the region and undertake the community involvement detailed.
12. The RSS needs to reflect other regional strategies, such as neighbouring RSSs- whilst it is important that these mesh, the complexity of achieving this whilst balancing regional and sub region issues, especially within the outlined timeframe, is a concern.

Summary of Draft PPS12

13. Draft PPS12 focuses on 'procedural policy' on what 'should' happen in preparing local development frameworks. These can be described as a 'portfolio' of local development documents that collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local authorities area.
14. A spatial approach to local development plans should be adopted to ensure most efficient land use, taking into account physical, economic, social and environmental factors. Strategies, policies and proposals should be clearly laid out with the means and timescales to which objectives will be met.

15. The development plan continues to be the starting point in the consideration for planning applications and will consist of two elements:
 - Regional Spatial Strategies, prepared by regional planning bodies
 - Development Plan documents, prepared by Unitary authorities
16. The Development Plan Documents (DPDs) include the following elements:
 - Core strategy
 - Site specific allocations of land
 - Area action plans (where needed)
 - Proposal map (with inset maps, where necessary)
17. The production of a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) along with a timetable of production of the DPDs is required.
18. The central feature is a *core strategy* setting out a long-term vision and strategic objectives for the whole LPA area, which once adopted, have all other development plan documents conforming to it. Broad locations for strategic development needs, such as housing, employment, retail and transport development should be included, providing certainty for at least a 10-year period (from adoption).
19. Review and monitoring is a key aspect of the government's approach to the planning system. Annual monitoring to assess implementation and the extent to which policies are being achieved should be carried out. In review, actual plan progress should be measured against targets and milestones set, with an assessment on:
 - The impact of the policies on national, regional and local targets and whether targets will be met, are behind schedule or will fail to be met, and if so reasons for this
 - Whether policies need adjusting or replacing or not working as intended or not achieving sustainable development objectives and if policies need changing, suggested actions to achieve this.

Analysis of Implications

20. As Herefordshire Council has passed the first statutory deposit stage of the UDP it is expected that the Plan will continue under the current system, under transitional arrangements.
21. Delivery of the new system will not solely rest with Herefordshire Council (planning authority) through its development control powers, but certain areas of significance will depend on other agencies for delivery, including the Council acting as Highways Authority through the Local Transport Plan.
22. The development of policies and procedure over time, with the rigorous and comprehensive public consultation recently carried out during the UDP process gives a bank of knowledge that should be used and made full use of within the new system.

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23. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and creation of a timetable for the production of DPDs will have an effect of 'holding' the authority to these constraints. A potential consequence of the SCI concerns objections to the plan on the grounds that consultation arrangements were unsound.
24. The Community Strategy, along with preparation of the SCI, especially with regard to the level of community involvement and consultation will have implications on resources, both in terms of time and cost. The number of documents to be produced, and of various complexities, will require detailed information gathering that will hold up under scrutiny so to ensure viability of future policies.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Cabinet Member (Environment) be recommended that the points summarised in the Analysis of Implications in this report forms the response of Herefordshire Council to be submitted to The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.