

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

**DATE: 14 AUGUST
2008**

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION/CABINET DECISION/KEY DECISION

Regeneration and Transport – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Robert Cook

**PUBLICATION DRAFT OF THE CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DOCUMENT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.**

1. Summary (expanded report summary)

This report asks for authority to progress to the next stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong, safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. This stage comprises the publication of the Core Strategy, an associated consultation period of no less than 6 weeks, consideration of comments and incorporation of any appropriate amendments prior to submission of the final document to the Secretary of State for examination for 'soundness'.

2. Recommendations

1. That Members agree the Core Strategy Development Plan Document for publication, consultation and submission to the Secretary of State;
2. That delegated authority is given to the Head of Planning Services with the Lead Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport, to make any necessary amendments associated with the publication process, and prior to submitting the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

There is a statutory duty for all local planning authorities to adopt and keep under review the development plan for their respective areas. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Core Strategy is a development plan document that will set out the Council's vision and spatial strategy for meeting known and anticipated development requirements. The

time horizon of the Core Strategy should be at least 15 years from the date of adoption.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development frameworks states the “Local planning authorities should prepare development plan documents taking into consideration the process of continuous community involvement.....and should front load the preparation of development plan documents by facilitating early involvement and securing inputs from the community and all stakeholders”.

It is necessary to seek the approvals from Cabinet prior to its formal presentation to Council in later this month.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest

arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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PUBLICATION DRAFT OF THE CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK.

SUMMARY

This report asks for authority to progress to the next stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong, safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. This stage comprises the publication of the Core Strategy, an associated consultation period of no less than 6 weeks, consideration of comments and incorporation of any appropriate amendments prior to submission of the final document to the Secretary of State for examination for 'soundness'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members agree the Core Strategy Development Plan Document for publication, consultation and submission to the Secretary of State;
2. That delegated authority is given to the Head of Planning Services with Lead Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport to make any necessary amendments associated with the publication process, prior to submitting the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State.

DETAIL

1. The Core Strategy is the key plan within the Local Development Framework. It sets out the vision and spatial strategy for meeting known and anticipated development requirements to 2024¹. It includes a key diagram that shows broad locations (not specific sites) for development to meet specific requirements. A Monitoring Framework and Implementation Plan are also required.

¹ The revised Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong, safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning, requires that the life of the Core Strategy is 15 years from the date of adoption (as opposed to 10 years in its predecessor). The anticipated date of adoption of the Core Strategy is September 2009.

2. In developing the Core Strategy, two main public consultation exercises have been undertaken, in May/June 2006 (relating to Issues and Options) and September/October 2007 (relating to Preferred Options).
3. Attached, as Appendix A is the draft Core Strategy. This gives a brief overview of Stockton Borough, identifies drivers for change, sets out a vision and strategic objectives for the area, and a suite of policies which will guide the Council in implementing key strategies, both Council strategies such as the Sustainable Community Strategy and wider Tees Valley initiatives such as the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative.
4. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document supports the Council's drive for regeneration of the Borough, which will increasingly concentrate housing development in the core urban area, giving priority to previously developed land. The provision of employment land will be more dispersed, recognising the importance of existing industrial estates, specialist clusters such as the chemical industries, and a key employment location at Wynyard. Emphasis is placed on sustainability and accessibility, in line with national and regional policy guidance. Improvements to the transport network, and the creation of an integrated public transport system are fundamental in achieving the council's spatial vision and objectives.
5. In seeking to achieve the spatial vision and objectives, the Core Strategy sets the direction in eleven key policies. These are:
 - Core Strategy Policy 1 The Spatial Strategy;
 - Core Strategy Policy 2 Sustainable Transport;
 - Core Strategy Policy 3 Sustainable Living;
 - Core Strategy Policy 4 Economic Regeneration;
 - Core Strategy Policy 5 Town Centres;
 - Core Strategy Policy 6 Community Facilities;
 - Core Strategy Policy 7 Housing Distribution and Phasing;
 - Core Strategy Policy 8 Housing Mix and Affordable Housing Provision;
 - Core Strategy Policy 9 Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People;
 - Core Strategy Policy 10 Environmental Enhancement; and
 - Core Strategy Policy 11 Planning Obligations.
6. The Core Strategy has been tested against, and informed by, sustainability objectives as set out in the Sustainability Appraisal that accompanies the Strategy (attached as Appendix B).
7. An Appropriate Assessment has also been undertaken, in accordance with the 1997 Habitats Regulations, as amended by the Conservation (Natural Habitats) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, Schedule 1. This is to assess whether the Core Strategy's proposals have the potential to impact on the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, and to ensure that solutions to negate the impact are considered. The Appropriate Assessment is attached as Appendix C.
8. Also accompanying the Core Strategy are:

- A Statement of Consultation (Appendix D)
- An Infrastructure Strategy, which demonstrates how the Core Strategy will be implemented, in terms of infrastructure needs and costs, phasing of development, funding sources and responsibility for delivery. This key document is now an essential part of the evidence base to support the Core Strategy and its role is to demonstrate the deliverability of proposals. The Infrastructure Strategy is attached as Appendix E.

THE NEXT STEPS

9. The next step in the process, as set out in revised PPS12, is to publish the Core Strategy, in late September, and invite representations from residents and stakeholders should they feel that the Core Strategy is not 'sound'. The period for the submission of representations should last for at least 6 weeks. It is proposed to allow an 8 week period within which comments can be submitted, which should allow sufficient time for consultees, parish councils in particular, to respond.
10. Following this period, minor amendments can be made to the Core Strategy, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State. It is anticipated that submission will take place early in 2009. The submitted Core Strategy must be the final version that the Council feels will best meet the Borough's needs to 2024. The Planning Inspectorate expects the submitted Core Strategy to be a 'sound' document. Post submission changes suggested by the Council will not be acceptable.
11. Following submission, the expected programme of events is as follows:
 - Pre-examination meeting (between the Planning Inspector appointed to conduct the examination into the 'soundness' of the Core Strategy, the Borough Council and those wishing to have their views considered during the examination);
 - Examination of the 'soundness' of the Core Strategy (April 2009)
 - Inspector's binding report;
 - Adoption of the Core Strategy (September 2009).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The production of the Core Strategy and associated documents, as required for publication and submission, can be made within existing budgetary provisions. However, Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) is based on meeting the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme, and missing the target date for the publication and submission could result in a reduction in the amount of HPDG awarded.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The publication and submission of Development Plan Documents are a statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. Failure to comply would lead to the Core Strategy being found "unsound".

RISK ASSESSMENT

The publication and submission of the Core Strategy is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

The Local Development Framework is the key delivery vehicle for the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The Core Strategy reflects the priorities of the SCS, as follows:

Economic Regeneration and Transport.

Economic regeneration, and the provision of a first-class integrated transport system, are central themes of the Core Strategy. The provision of employment land, support for existing and new employment uses, improving skills and training, improvements to the strategic and secondary road network and public transport systems are all included in policies of the Core Strategy.

Safer Communities

The Core Strategy also aims to ensure development can make a positive impact to the safety of the Borough's residents. The Vision specifically refers to the "creation of safe communities". Safety and well-being are central to proposals, and the Strategy ensures that all development is designed with safety in mind.

Children and Young People

The Core Strategy supports the provision of education and training facilities, provision of open space and recreation facilities, and other community facilities, to improve the health and achievement of children and young people.

Health and Well-being

The Core Strategy seeks to bring together the spatial aspects of other plans and strategies, and the implications of policies for the health of the community are taken into account through the Sustainability Appraisal. The Vision specifically refers to the "creation of healthycommunities" and a holistic approach has been taken to considering the impact on health of providing quality homes, access to employment opportunities, improved access to health care, sport, leisure and recreation facilities.

Environment and Housing

The Core Strategy is aimed at ensuring development makes a positive contribution to sustainable development within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. Sustainability is at the heart of proposed policies, which also seek to enhance the quality of the Borough's natural and built environment. The provision of housing to meet all needs and incomes is a key objective.

Supporting Themes:-

Stronger Communities

A key objective of the Core Strategy is to enable all of Stockton Borough's residents to live in prosperous, cohesive, sustainable communities.

Older Adults

The needs of older adults are recognised in the Core Strategy through the provision of housing to suit all needs and incomes, particularly through the provision of lifelong homes that are adaptable to meet changing needs, and through improved accessibility to all services and facilities.

Arts Leisure and Culture

The Core Strategy supports the provision of community facilities that will widen the Borough's cultural, sport, recreation and leisure offer.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken of the policies contained in the Core Strategy. A number of policies contained in the Core Strategy have been judged to have a positive impact on some or all of the six diversity stands. No adverse impacts on any group were identified. An action plan for further improvements has been developed. A copy of the EIA has been placed in the Members' library. The full schedule of consultation responses submitted to date relating to the preparation of the Core Strategy can be found on the Council's website at www.stockton.gov.uk/spatialplanning.

CONSULTATION

As this is a Borough wide document, it is not possible to identify specific wards or ward councillors for consultation. The Core Strategy has been subject to a wide range of consultation initiatives during its preparation, and these are recorded in the Statement of Consultation that accompanies the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy has been considered by the Local Development Framework Member Steering Group and by Planning Committee. Upon publication, there will be an 8-week period when representations can be made in relation to the 'soundness' of the plan.

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Background Papers

Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong, safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning;
The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004;
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008;
Core Strategy Issues and Options paper;
Core Strategy Preferred Options paper.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: N/A

Property

Development Plan Documents (DPD) will only have implications if proposals are likely to involve development of Council land or assets. The Core Strategy is the overarching plan which sets out broad locations for development but does not go into detail. Site-specific allocations will be included as part of the Regeneration DPD. However, the Local Development Framework should both inform and support the Council's Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan.