

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting3rd November 2011

1. Title of Item/Report

Local Development Framework - Stockton on Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy

2. Record of the Decision

Members considered a composite report covering three areas that formed part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, including the Environment Development Plan Document and Regeneration Development Plan Document.

It was explained that, collectively, these documents and the associated information would be used in the determination of planning applications. They would also help to underpin and inform many future work programmes developed by Stockton Borough Council and partner organisations:

Members noted that the Green Infrastructure Strategy set out the strategic objectives for green infrastructure planning in the Borough, and identified a green infrastructure network which would be delivered and enhanced through the spatial planning process and other mechanisms. An earlier consultation draft had been approved by Cabinet in June 2009. The Final Draft was provided to members and it was explained that it had been prepared by the Borough Council on behalf of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group. The group comprised officer representatives from the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Groundwork North East, Industry Nature Conservation Association (INCA), Natural England, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.

Cabinet was informed that the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group would oversee the preparation of a partnership Action Plan and support its delivery. In doing so, the Steering Group would continue to liaise with other partners through Stockton Renaissance.

With regard to Local Wildlife and Geological Sites, often referred to simply as 'Local Sites' it was noted that these were non statutory areas, which were considered to be of local importance for biodiversity and/or

geodiversity. A study had been undertaken to identify a number of such sites across the Borough. In accordance with government guidance, the criteria used to select these 'Local Sites' was agreed through the 'local sites partnership', in this case the Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group. The sites were detailed on a plan provided to Cabinet.

Information held on Local Sites would help to inform the on-going work of the Council and its partners in relation to biodiversity. In addition, under the new Single Data List published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, local authorities were required to submit annual data to central government on the 'proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management was being achieved'.

Cabinet noted that the Council had commissioned research to provide a robust analysis of the Borough's rural and urban fringe landscapes and to determine the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area was able to accommodate change. The study categorised the Borough's landscape into seven Landscape Character Areas each comprising a number of smaller Landscape Units. Members were provided with a plan of the Borough showing this. Information on landscape character would help to inform the on-going work of the Council and its partners in relation to landscape conservation and enhancement.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy, data on Local Wildlife and Geological Sites and Stockton-on-Tees Landscape Character Assessment & Capacity Study be approved as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, including the Environment and Regeneration Development Plan Documents.
2. The publication of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy be endorsed.
3. Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group be tasked to prepare and oversee delivery of an overarching partnership Action Plan, in liaison with a wider network of partners.
4. Officers be tasked to work in liaison with Ward Councillors, Area Partnership Boards, Town/Parish Councils and other partners to identify local green infrastructure projects to be delivered by Stockton Borough Council or other delivery partners as part of the overarching Action Plan.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To endorse and make available the documents and data referred to in the report as part of the evidence base for the preparation of local development documents. The Green Infrastructure Strategy would also inform the Council's future work programmes, helping to identify priorities for action and approaches to the on-going management and maintenance of green infrastructure.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Rose declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Local Development Framework - Green Infrastructure Strategy as he was a Board Member of the Industry Nature Conservation Association

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday 11 November 2011

Proper Officer
07 August 2011