

AGENDA NO.

**REPORT TO PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

DATE: 8th April 2009

**CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**Local Development Framework: Submission Version Core Strategy
Development Plan Document (DPD), Schedule of Comments and Revised
Habitats Regulations Assessment.**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The Core Strategy DPD is the key document in the new Local Development Framework (LDF) and will provide strategic planning policies for the Borough. Members have agreed previous versions of the document for consultation purposes; Issues and Options in March 2006; Preferred Options in June 2007; and the Publication Draft in August 2008. The next stage in the process is for the Core Strategy to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. At Cabinet in August 2008, members resolved that prior to submission, major changes to the Core Strategy should be brought back to Cabinet.
2. This report presents, for members' comments, the Submission Version of the Core Strategy with proposed changes highlighted in track changes mode (Appendix 1) and a separate schedule of all comments made to the Publication Draft and how they have been dealt with (Appendix 2), and informed by the Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appendix 3). Appendix 1 is attached, Appendices 2 and 3 are available on agenda for Planning Committee dated 8th April 2009.
3. Once the proposed changes have been agreed, the Publication Draft Core Strategy and a Schedule of Proposed Changes will be submitted to PINS and dates for the independent examination will be arranged.

RECOMMENDATION

4. Members are recommended to:
 1. Endorse the Proposed Changes to the Publication Draft Core Strategy and;
 2. Endorse how comments made to the Core Strategy in response to the Publication Consultation have been dealt with;
 3. Endorse the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy.

BACKGROUND

1. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is the key document in the new Local Development Framework (LDF), which, when adopted, will provide strategic planning policies to guide the location of future development in the Borough over the next 15 years to 2024.

2. The preparation of DPDs is closely circumscribed by the Planning Acts and associated legislation and national planning guidance which set out the stages through which documents must proceed before they become statutory planning policy.
3. The Core Strategy has already passed through a number of these preparatory stages and associated consultation periods; Issues and Options, Preferred Options, Publication and is now moving on to its final stages of submission, examination and adoption.
4. Attached at Appendix 1 is the version of the Core Strategy DPD that the Council intends to submit. It is presented in track changes mode so that members can easily identify which changes have been made as a result of representations made during the Publication Consultation in November and December 2008. Appendix 2 (available to view on agenda for Planning Committee 8th April 2009) is a schedule of all comments made during the Publication Draft consultation, which indicates how officers have dealt with them. Appendix 3 is the Habitat Regulations Assessment (available to view on agenda for Planning Committee 9th April 2009). This is a technical document that forms part of the evidence base, and demonstrates how the need to protect sites, which are of European importance for their nature conservation value, has informed policy development. This has been amended since publication to acknowledge comments submitted by Natural England and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
5. The Submission Stage is the commencement of the examination of the Core Strategy. There is no further period of public consultation. The Core Strategy itself and associated documentation (Schedule of Proposed Changes, Consultation Statement, Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessment, the Infrastructure Strategy and all of the documents comprising the evidence base) are sent to the Planning Inspectorate. It will be allocated to a Planning Inspector who will undertake an initial checking procedure. Events may then take two courses of action:
 - The Core Strategy may proceed straight to examination;
 - If PINS have reservations about the soundness of the Core Strategy or any part of the evidence base, the inspector will call an exploratory meeting at which he may direct the Council to:
 - Undertake further work on the evidence base;
 - Undertake further consultation;
 - Consider withdrawal of the Core Strategy.
6. It is proposed to submit the Core Strategy to PINS in May 2009.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to:

1. Endorse the Proposed Changes to the Publication Draft Core Strategy and;
2. Endorse how comments made to the Core Strategy in response to the Publication Consultation have been dealt with;
3. Endorse the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy.

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services.

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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;
All available at www.communities.gov.uk.
Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper;
Preferred Options Paper
Publication Draft
All available at www.spatialplans.gov.uk.
Evidence Base listed in section 17, page 71 of Core Strategy.
Available from Spatial Planning Manager on ext 6054.

Financial Implications - Any financial implications from the report will be met within existing budgets.

Environmental Implications- One of the fundamental purpose of the Core Strategy is the protection and enhancement of the environment and to ensure new development does not create negative impacts. It contains specific policies that encourage sustainable design and living and afford protection to the environment.

Community Safety Implications – The Core Strategy contains policies that seek to promote community cohesion, social inclusivity and encourage developments, which incorporate the principles of designing-out crime.

Human Rights Implications - The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 has been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward and Ward Councillors – The contents of the Core Strategy, the Schedule of Comments and Habitats Regulations Assessment are applicable to all wards in the Borough. Previous versions of the documents were extensively consulted on.

