

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

29th MAY 2008

ADDITIONAL REDDITCH GROWTH STUDY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Jill Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report updates members on the current position in relation to the planning implications of Redditch growth as proposed in the RSS Phase 2 revision.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members note the report

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members have received a report elsewhere on this agenda which provides an update regarding progress on the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) Phase 2 revision. Members will recall that it is proposed that some of Redditch's growth (3300 dwellings and 32 ha of employment land) should be accommodated in the adjoining districts of Stratford-on-Avon and Bromsgrove.
- 3.2 The WMRSS does not identify how these requirements should be split between Bromsgrove and Stratford-on-Avon Districts, which presents a challenge for the authorities in progressing their respective core strategies. The authorities need a clear way forward which will enable them to prepare core strategies which are in general conformity with the WMRSS, otherwise they run the risk of this DPD being found unsound at examination in public.
- 3.3 Members will also recall that a joint study, funded by Worcestershire County Council and the adjoining districts, was completed in December 2007 by White Young Green. This report examined the implications of development around Redditch, including site constraints and opportunities. It did not however determine a priority of sites to be developed nor examine the split of development between Bromsgrove and Stratford Districts. This work needs to be done to enable each district to develop appropriate policies within their respective core strategies.
- 3.4 A meeting was held on 19th May between the Leaders, Chief Executives and Planning Officers of all three Councils, together with representatives of Government Office for the West Midlands, the West Midlands Regional

Assembly and Worcestershire and Warwickshire County Councils. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss a way forward regarding the implications of the growth of Redditch proposed in the RSS phase 2 revision.

3.5 The options put forward are as follows;

<p>Option 1 – To prepare a joint Core Strategy for the whole of the administrative areas of Redditch Borough, Bromsgrove and Stratford-on-Avon District</p>	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the robust mechanism required by GOWM • Ensures that the local authorities were able to determine the split themselves <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require the re-alignment of our existing Core Strategies • Resources required to establish joint working arrangements at both officer and member level • Lack of functional relationships between the majority of Stratford District and Redditch (in many ways this is a peripheral issue)
<p>Option 2 – To commission a further technical study building on the work already undertaken by White Young Green. This would identify clearly the preferred areas for development.</p>	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a robust technical evidence base which the authorities could present jointly at the RSS Examination in Public (EIP) • Provides the mechanism required by GOWM • Enables authorities to progress their Core Strategies <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional cost • EIP panel may not accept the findings.
<p>Option 3 – Undertake further analysis of the White Young Green Study ‘in-house’ and agree an informal position between the three authorities.</p>	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities could present a joint case to the EIP • Provides the mechanism required by GOWM • Enables authorities to progress their Core Strategies • No / limited additional cost <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical validity of the work will be challenged at the EIP • Lack of public involvement • EIP panel may not accept the findings.
<p>Option 4 – Each authority goes its own way and presents its own case to the EIP</p>	<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None (in pure planning terms) <p>Disadvantages</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIP panel will determine the split or the Secretary of State may dictate the course of action we should take e.g. Joint Core Strategy • Core Strategies will not accord with the RSS and will be 'unsound' • Abortive work on Core Strategies • Vulnerability to planning by appeal
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3.5 The option agreed upon unanimously was option 2, to commission a further technical study to be jointly funded.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 It was estimated that the costs for carrying out such a study was likely to be in the region of £50,000 and contributors would be Worcestershire County Council, Stratford District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Bromsgrove District Council and the West Midlands Regional Assembly. At the meeting on the 19th May both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive agreed to part fund this work to the sum of £10,000.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The RSS is the responsibility of the West Midlands Regional Assembly and is being prepared under the regulations of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; the district council also has an obligation under the act to prepare a Local Development Documents in line with the Local Development Scheme.

6. **COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

6.1 The ability of the Council to deliver its objectives is affected by the status of the Local Development Framework (LDF). All documents produced as part of the LDF have to be in general conformity with the RSS, therefore the RSS will ultimately impact on these objectives and priorities. The table below indicates potential impacts.

6.2 The ability to implement the Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy is also highly dependant of the Local Development Framework. Many of the areas covered by the Sustainable Community Strategy cannot be delivered without formal planning polices.

Council Objective (CO)	Regeneration (CO1)	Council Priority (CP)	A thriving market town (CP1)
Impacts			
Policies in the RSS support the development of centres across the region, including those not specifically named as major urban areas or, settlements of significant development, the ability to regenerate the town are not adversely effected by policies in the RSS			

Council Objective (CO)	Improvement (CO2)	Council Priority (CP)	Customer service (CP2)
Impacts			
No impact			

Council Objective (CO)	Sense of Community and Well Being (CO3)	Council Priority (CP)	Sense of community (CP3)
Impacts			
The RSS gives a strategic framework for planning across the region. Plans at a more local level can then create planning policies that provide developments which can enhance the sense of community and well being.			

Council Objective (CO)	Environment (CO4)	Council Priority (CP)	Housing (CP4) Clean streets and recycling (CP5)
Impacts			
The RSS guides the levels and distribution of housing development across the region. The ability of Bromsgrove to satisfy all of its affordable housing needs are significantly reduced by this emerging policy of housing restraint in districts which are not Major Urban Areas or, Settlements of Significant Development.			
In the Long term the RSS could help provide more waste management facilities in the district.			

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Inability to produce development plan documents which are judged to be sound by the planning inspectorate.

7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment
Key Objective Ref No: 6
Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

7.3 Progress on the LDF is monitored by the government through the Local Development Schemes and Annual Monitoring Reports produced by the

Strategic Planning section. The progress on the Local Development Scheme is a key factor used to allocate Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Failure to progress the LDF inline with the Local Development Scheme could have short term financial implications. Consistent failure to produce LDF documents specifically the Core Strategy could result in the GOWM taking the strategic planning function away from control of the council. In this case they would employ other planning professionals to prepare the core strategy on behalf of the GOWM and then impose it on the District Council, whilst also requesting that the district council pay the consultancy fees accrued in the process.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Endorsing the agreement to carry out a further technical study will have no direct implications on the council's customers; however the implications of the work are likely to have a wide sub regional impact on customers as does the WMRSS.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This study will form part of the evidence base to inform the Core Strategy. Consultation will be carried out with all sections of the community as the plan progresses.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The proposed study is to be jointly funded by a number of different bodies thereby distributing the costs.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	The policy decisions taken at a regional level directly effect the ability to generate local policies especially in relation to planning

Environmental	As stated above their will be implications to the environment over a long period of time, the exact effects are currently unknown.
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12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships & Projects	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

14. APPENDICES

None

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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