

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

3rd July 2008

CORE STRATEGY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs J Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond, Head of Planning & Environment Services
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members on the proposed structure and content of the Preferred Options Core Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Members note progress and the proposed format of the Core Strategy Preferred Options.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A key part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF) planning system is the requirement on the Council to produce a Core Strategy.

3.2 The Core Strategy is a strategic level document that provides the framework for subsequent Development Plan Documents. It will contain a spatial vision, strategic objectives for the area, together with core policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

3.3 Members will recall at the meeting of the LDFWP on the 29th May 2008 the Spatial Vision for the core strategy was approved, subject to the inclusion of reference to Longbridge, for public consultation purposes.

3.4 Bromsgrove's strategic planning framework has to be in line with National policy, in general conformity with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS), whilst taking into account the emerging phased revisions of RSS. Emerging updates to national planning policy statements will set new challenges for Bromsgrove to 2026. Conformity will be assessed at Examination in Public under the tests of soundness.

Strategic Objectives

3.5 A set of Strategic Objectives have now been defined which aim to deliver the spatial vision for Bromsgrove by 2026. They build upon national and regional planning policy objectives and address key local issues. The objectives provide the basis for the preferred spatial strategy for the District which together with the core policies aim to secure delivery;

- SO1 - Deliver the required level of housing in line with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy
- SO2 - Provide a range of housing types and tenures with a particular focus on affordable housing to meet the needs of the local population
- SO3 - Regenerate Bromsgrove Town Centre to create a thriving market town
- SO4 – Provide sufficient opportunities for employment growth, particularly in knowledge based industries and high tech manufacturing whilst supporting rural diversification
- SO5 - Focus new development in the most sustainable locations in the district
- SO6 - Create a more integrated, sustainable and reliable public transport network across the district
- SO7- Promote high quality design of new developments
- SO8 - Protect and enhance the unique character and appearance of the historic built and natural environment throughout the district
- SO9- To protect and improve the countryside and the diversity of wildlife and habitats
- SO10 - Enhance the vitality and viability of local centres across the district
- SO11 - Encourage energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy in the District
- SO12 - Encourage recycling including waste, rainwater and building materials
- SO13- Conserve water supplies
- SO14- Respond to increased risks of flooding
- SO15 - Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Bromsgrove's population
- SO16 - Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture

Sustainable Community Strategy

3.6 One of the current tests of soundness, No. 5, states that the Core Strategy must demonstrate that “ It has had regard to the authority’s community strategy”.

3.7 The work of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in identifying key issues for the district in the Sustainable Community Strategy has helped to inform the spatial objectives in the Core Strategy. The responses to the issues and options consultations have also had a significant impact on the process. The implementation of the Core Strategy will put an emphasis on the delivery of the spatial objectives which will in turn help to deliver many of the Local Area Agreements within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

3.8 To provide a level of coherence and consistency it is proposed that the topic headings will build on the key issues identified within the Sustainable Community Strategy. The issues of ‘meeting the needs of children and young people’ and ‘stronger communities’ have been combined under the heading of ‘meeting the needs of the community’. Whilst the issue of ‘communities that are safe and feel safe’ will form part of the topic entitled ‘a better environment for today and tomorrow’. Each topic will focus on several key areas and a small number of

broad strategic policies will enable the delivery of the vision for Bromsgrove in 2026. Due to their spatial nature there will inevitably be some overlap between the policy areas.

Proposed Structure

3.9 The headings with suggested core policies are therefore as follows;

A. A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow

1. Climate Change
2. Distribution of Housing
3. Rural Regeneration
4. Promoting High Quality Design
5. Protecting Natural and Man Made Assets
6. Responding to Natural Forces

B. Economic Success that is Shared by All

7. Distribution of New Employment Development
8. Retail and Town Centre Regeneration

C. Improving Health and Well Being

9. Sustainable Transport
10. Open Space and Recreation
11. Biodiversity and Geodiversity

D. Meeting the Needs of the Community

12. Size Type and Tenure of Housing
13. Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople
14. The Scale of New Housing
15. Affordable Housing
16. Sustainable Communities

Sample Policy

3.10 The example policy below provides an illustration of what a Core Strategy policy may contain. The guidance states that whilst policies should essentially be a strategic level policy, they must also be locally distinctive, hence in this case the reference to the proposed new railway station at Bromsgrove.

3.11 CP9 Sustainable Transport

The Local Development Framework will deliver an improvement in accessibility by encouraging more sustainable means of travel. Public transport needs to be a convenient and efficient alternative to the private car in order to encourage more people to use it. Encouraging more rail travel, for instance, is an effective way of reducing car journeys. The availability of car parking and cycling facilities at railway stations is important to encourage more people to switch from car to rail for at least part of their journey. Cyclepaths, footpaths, and bus connections to

stations can make an effective contribution to enabling people to move through and around the District.

New developments will be assessed against the following criteria so as to ensure that there is a reduction in the need to travel and, where travel is necessary, an increase in the use of sustainable transport modes;

- a) Developments which generate significant travel demands must include transport assessments and should be located adjacent to existing or proposed public transport links;*
- b) Developments which generate significant commercial movements should be located close to suitable rail freight facilities or roads designed and managed as traffic distributors;*
- c) To support increased public transport usage only essential car parking will be allowed at new developments close to public transport interchanges;*
- d) All new developments should be accessible by sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling;*
- e) All major developments should incorporate proposals to increase the scope for walking and cycling.*

Furthermore, Bromsgrove District Council will work towards reducing the need to travel by car and deliver a sustainable transport network by working with Worcestershire County Council Transport Department and rail industry partners to secure a new and improved Bromsgrove Railway Station with adequate car parking and cycle facilities at the station and bus connections to Bromsgrove Town Centre.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A budget currently exists for progressing the Core Strategy and there are no direct implications of receiving this update.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Plan once adopted will become part of the Statutory Development Plan for the District required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

Council Objective (CO)	Regeneration (CO1)	Council Priority (CP)	A thriving market town (CP1) Housing (CP2)
Impacts			
The Core Strategy identifies the long term spatial vision for the district this includes key areas such as the regeneration of the town centre. Policies within the core strategy will direct where and when new housing should be built across the district up to 2026, it will also look at affordable housing and be supplemented by an Affordable Housing SPD which will look to maximise affordable housing provision across the district.			
Council Objective (CO)	Customer service (CP2)	Council Priority (CP)	Customer service (CP3)
Impacts			
The issues and options process has involved detailed consultation with the general public and the completed core strategy will be a publicly available document that identifies the spatial vision for the district.			
Council Objective (CO)	Sense of Community and Well Being (CO3)	Council Priority (CP)	Sense of community (CP4)
Impacts			
The core strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for the district and the strategic policies required in delivering that vision. The core strategy goes beyond identifying land uses and attempts to tackle social and economic issues affected by the implementation of various policies.			
Council Objective (CO)	Environment (CO4)	Council Priority (CP)	Clean Streets and recycling (CP5)
Impacts			
The Core Strategy could contain policies which encourage recycling			

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

- Inability to produce development plan document which is judged to be sound by the planning inspectorate and therefore resulting in non legally compliant Strategic planning service

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

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Core Strategy is likely to have an impact on many different aspects of people's lives including living, working, shopping, leisure and education. Public consultation has been and will be extensively undertaken throughout the process.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An equalities impact assessment will be carried out on the final submission version of the strategy, although attempts will be made to consult with all sections of society as the plan progresses towards completion.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Whilst there are no direct value for money implications connected with this report, methods to provide value for money are continuously being explored, for instance via joint procurement for external consultancy work identified as a requirement to provide a robust evidence base for the Core Strategy.

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 core strategy forms an essential part of the LDF and the policies contained within the core strategy will shape future development.
Environmental	Core strategy will contain policies in relation to the environment.

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

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

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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