

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

**17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 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 progress regarding the preparation of the Preferred Options Core Strategy and timetable.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That Members note progress on the preparation of the Core Strategy Preferred Options and the proposed timetable.

**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 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008 the Spatial Vision for the core strategy was approved for public consultation. Consultation has begun and has been run alongside consultation on the Town Centre Area Action Plan in order to save costs in terms of finance and staffing for example savings have been made on postage and staffing at events such as the Street Theatre whereby both documents could be consulted on simultaneously. Consultation is due to end on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2008.

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.

#### **4. PREFERRED OPTION CORE STRATEGY**

4.1 A copy of the latest version of the Core Strategy is now attached. Members will recall that on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008 a copy of a very early draft of the document was circulated to give Members the earliest possible opportunity to be involved in the preparation of the document.

4.2 Members will recall at your previous meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 the proposed structure of the core strategy and a sample policy was noted. In summary and to recap the headings (which relates to the Sustainable Community Strategy) with suggested core policies were 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

It is stressed this is a working document which is being amended and updated as new evidence is produced. At your meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008 you will recall that an update was provided on the studies which had been commissioned or were being completed in-house. These will comprise the evidence base of the core strategy and inform its core policies. Progress on this work is as follows:

##### **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Royal Haskoning)**

Joint study on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch councils. Due for imminent completion. It is anticipated that a verbal update will be provided to members at your meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**Water Cycle Study (Royal Haskoning)**

Joint study on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch councils. Due for imminent completion. It is anticipated that a verbal update will be provided to members at your meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**PPG 17 Study ( PMP)**

Funded interdepartmentally between Planning and Environment Services and Culture and Community Services. Due imminently first week in September. It is anticipated that a verbal update will be provided to members at your meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**Employment Land Review (Drivers Jonas)**

The first few chapters of this document have been provided with remaining chapters due for imminent completion. It is anticipated that a verbal update will be provided to members at your meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

This assessment will inform the Core Strategy on potential housing sites up to 2026 and is being carried out in house. The date for submission of potential housing sites by landowners/ agents expired at the beginning of May and submitted sites are currently being assessed for their suitability. In accordance with best practice a Forum of interested parties comprising developers, landowners and the Home Builders Federation has been held to discuss principles for assessment. A draft document will be prepared for the beginning of October to inform the Core Strategy which be reported to your meeting.

**Appropriate Assessment (AA)**

This assessment is a requirement of the 'Habitats Directive' (92/43/EEC) and examines the potential effects of a proposed plan on European sites of importance. This work is being carried out in-house and a draft report has been prepared, initial comments received from Natural England and a final version is due to be forwarded to Natural England shortly for approval. This document is however live and therefore will be reviewed once final housing/employment figures are confirmed.

**Housing Market Assessment**

This study has been procured by Strategic Planning, Strategic Housing and RSL Preferred Partners. It will provide a detailed study of the housing market in Bromsgrove and is due to be completed in the Autumn.

**A Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment of the South Housing Market Area**

This assessment was carried out by an affordable housing consultant on behalf of the South Housing Market Partnership, which comprises 8 District Authorities and 2 County Councils. It provides information on accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers to set the appropriate number, type and distribution of additional pitches to be provided and forms a draft policy in the attached document.

## **Infrastructure**

Joint working is underway with relevant infrastructure/service providers to explore issues such as transport, education, utilities, housing, health and emergency services to ensure that the early identification of any showstoppers are highlighted in terms of delivery of the Strategy.

## **Biodiversity**

A Service Level Agreement is currently being set up with Biological Records Centre to provide accurate information on specific sites.

## **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report**

This report was originally written in 2005 and has now been updated. Written responses from statutory consultees, Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage have now been received and the document has been amended in accordance with these comments. This document is now complete.

## **Sustainability Appraisal on Preferred Option**

This document is currently being prepared in house

## **Final Sustainability Appraisal**

This document is currently being prepared and itemises all of the work that has been undertaken on Sustainability Appraisal throughout the production of the Core Strategy and will accompany the Preferred Option for consultation at the end of October.

## **5. TIMESCALES**

Preferred Option consultation	31 Oct 2008
Submission to Inspectorate	May 2009
EIP	Nov 2009
Receipt of Binding Report	April 2010
Adoption	June/July 2010

The proposed date for consultation on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008 coincides with the launch of Core Strategy consultation on Preferred Option of the neighbouring districts of Stratford on Avon and Redditch. This has the advantage of further demonstrating cross boundary working/ awareness and ensures a consistent sub regional-approach is presented externally in relation to the Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 revision.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

6.1 It is anticipated that a final version will be reported to your meeting in October before the deadline consultation launch at the end of October.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## 8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Regeneration (CO1)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	A thriving market town (CP1) Housing (CP2)
<b>Impacts</b>			
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.			
<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Customer service (CP2)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Customer service (CP3)
<b>Impacts</b>			
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.			
<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Sense of Community and Well Being (CO3)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Sense of community (CP4)
<b>Impacts</b>			
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.			
<b>Council Objective (CO)</b>	Environment (CO4)	<b>Council Priority (CP)</b>	Clean Streets and recycling (CP5)
<b>Impacts</b>			
The Core Strategy could contain policies which encourage recycling			

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 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.

## 10. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 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

10.2 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

## 11. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 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.

## 12. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 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.

## 13. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 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 and striving to carry out consultation on various documents concurrently thereby achieving cost savings.

## 14. 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.
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**15. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes at CMT 1/9/08
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	Yes at CMT 1/9/08
Executive Director - Services	Yes at CMT 1/9/08
Assistant Chief Executive	Yes at CMT1/9/08
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

**16. WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards.

**17. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Attached appendix of latest version of draft Core Strategy.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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