

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

**16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2009**

**DRAFT 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 update Members on the current position in relation to the consultation carried out on the Draft Core Strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members note progress on the consultation process in relation to the Draft Core Strategy.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members will recall on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008 the Draft Core Strategy was approved for consultation purposes.
- 3.2 To recap, the Draft Core Strategy is not the final document and is not a draft plan but rather, it provides the basis for consultation and is capable of being changed prior to submission. A final document will subsequently be prepared for submission to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Inspector.
- 3.3 Although proposed detailed wording of policies was not required at this stage, it was included in order to test them prior to Submission.

**4.0 UPDATE**

- 4.1 Consultation on the Draft Core Strategy commenced on the 31st October 2008 for a period of approximately 15 weeks until 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Two other documents were also specifically consulted upon during this period including the Sustainability Appraisal and the Consultation Report.
- 4.2 Letters and emails were sent to all consultees held on the LDF database which includes statutory consultees, organisations and individuals who had previously expressed a wish to be consulted. Statutory Consultees received hard copies of the document and other consultees received notification and a summary leaflet which also detailed where the full document could be viewed. The dedicated website contained information on the document itself, the consultation process, together with links to

other relevant documents and the evidence base. Offers of individual presentations on the Draft Core Strategy were sent to all Parish Councils. These offers were taken up by the Hagley and Alvechurch Parish Councils and also by CALC. Copies of the document were made available in the Customer Service Centre, local libraries and the reception at the Council House. A static exhibition was also prepared which, for the majority of the period, was displayed in the Customer Service Centre. Two “drop in” days were organised, one in conjunction with Redditch on the 6<sup>th</sup> January and one at Bromsgrove Council House on the 8<sup>th</sup> January. Bromsgrove’s “drop in” day was well attended with over 50 people participating in the event. The event had been advertised at the Customer Service Centre, on the website, in the individual letters/ emails, in Together Bromsgrove and in an advert which appeared in the local press.

- 4.3 Approximately 120 responses had been received by 17<sup>th</sup> February, either by post or email. 36% of responses were received from other statutory bodies and other similar organisations, 35% from the private sector and 28% from members of the public. The findings are that the consultation has been generally positive and helpful. Useful responses include for example, updates of information, suggestions for improvements and pointers on how to strengthen the evidence base. The results are currently being analysed in detail and appropriate officer responses are being formulated.
- 4.4 The Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) have also responded and have raised various concerns about the document, for example, that it considers that it “contains a number of criteria based development control policies, more appropriate to old style local plans”. It is also concerned about the treatment of cross boundary issues with Redditch. As it has similar concerns in relation to Redditch’s Draft Core Strategy, a joint meeting with both Councils has been requested. This is due to take place on 9<sup>th</sup> March and Members will therefore be verbally updated on the outcome at your meeting.
- 4.5 Joint Member meetings have also taken place between Stratford DC, Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC to discuss the findings of the White Young Green Stage 2 Study and in order to establish a way forward. The results of these meetings are reported elsewhere on your agenda.
- 4.4 A letter has been received from the West Midlands Regional Assembly confirming that the document is in Regional Conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy.

## **5. NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 The responses will be analysed in detail and systematically recorded. Officer’s responses to the representations will be prepared and changes recommended to the document(s) as appropriate. Such changes will be reported back to you in due course.

- 5.2 Following the outcome of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Examination in Public (WMRSS EiP), as discussed elsewhere on your agenda, it is proposed to allocate strategic sites, which will be indicated on a detailed Proposals Map and subject of further consultation prior to Submission.
- 5.3 Submission of the final document is unlikely to take place until the outcome of the WMRSS EiP is known. Secretary of State Proposed Changes are scheduled for "late 2009". Submission is therefore unlikely to occur until after this time. This is also being discussed with GOWM at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March and similarly Members will be updated verbally on this aspect.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications of receiving this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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) Amendment Regulations 2008.

## **8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

### **8.1 Objective 1 Regeneration - Priorities, Town Centre and Housing**

The Draft Core Strategy identifies the long term spatial vision for the district this includes key areas such as the regeneration of the town centre.

Furthermore, proposed policies within the Draft Core Strategy direct where and when new housing should be built across the district up to 2026, it looks at affordable housing, which will be supplemented by an Affordable Housing SPD which will aim to maximise affordable housing provision across the district.

### **8.2 Objective 3 Improvement- Priority, Sense of Community**

Extensive consultation has been carried out at various stages during the preparation of the Draft Core Strategy and in the course of the preparation of the supporting evidence base. The Draft Core Strategy is a publicly available document that identifies the vision for the District up to 2026.

### **8.3 Objective 4 Environment- Priority, Clean Streets and Climate Change**

The Draft Core Strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for the district and the strategic policies required in delivering that vision. It attempts to tackle social, economic and environmental issues affected by the implementation of various policies. Climate change is a central theme of the Draft Core Strategy and it contains specific policies which address this issue.

## 9. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

9.1 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

9.2 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

## 10. **CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 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.

## 11. **EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 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.

## 12. **VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 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.

## 13. **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	Draft Core strategy contains policies in relation to the environment.

#### 14. 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

#### 15. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

#### CONTACT OFFICER

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