

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

15TH APRIL 2010

CORE STRATEGY

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs J Dyer
Responsible Director	John Staniland Executive Director – Planning, Regeneration and Housing Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on issues in relation to preparation of the Draft Core Strategy, joint working and in particular progress on the Redditch Growth consultation

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the content of the report in relation to preparation of the Core Strategy
- 2.2 That Members note progress on joint working and initial findings on the joint Redditch Growth consultation

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members will recall that at the meeting on 21st January the joint consultation leaflet was approved for consultation purposes and an update on joint working was provided.
- 3.2 The arrangements for the consultation were outlined as follows:
- It was proposed to commence joint consultation on this leaflet on 1st February 2010 for a period of 6 weeks ending on the 15th March 2010.
 - Drop in days in Redditch were scheduled for
11th Feb – Town Hall (2-9pm)
13th Feb – Kingfisher Centre (all day)
24th Feb – Palace Theatre (from 6.30pm)
 - It was agreed that targeted consultation would be carried out in local Parish's in Bromsgrove such as Alvechurch, Beoley, Bentley/Pauncefoot and Tutnall/ Cobley,
 - Publicity material was to be prepared and displayed at appropriate locations around Bromsgrove.

4. UPDATE

4.1 Joint consultation

- 4.2 Due to last minute changes to the leaflet, consultation commenced on 8th February pushing the end date back to the 22nd March. Various bodies have requested extensions to this date such as Natural England and therefore as this is a non statutory consultation, it has been agreed that a final cut off date should be the end of April.
- 4.3 Drop in days were held in Redditch with generally good attendance achieved. Drop in days have also been held at Alvechurch Baptist Church (2nd March) and a joint event at Bentley Village Hall for Bentley/Pauncefoot and Tutnall/Cobley Parishes (17th March) again with good attendance, including County and Parish Councillors. A presentation was also made on 8th March to Alvechurch Parish Council.
- 4.4 To date over 200 written representations¹ have been received. A considerable number of the responses received have been from residents objecting to additional growth near their homes. Mixed responses on all options for cross boundary growth have been received with significant objections from residents on Birmingham Road, Bordesley and residents in the Webheath/ Foxlydiate area. Some objections have been received which oppose the principle of any development at all. A verbal update on this issue will be provided at your meeting as responses are still being received.

4.5 PINS meeting

- 4.6 The purpose of the PINS visit was for the Inspector to consider what has been done so far in the preparation of the two Core Strategies and to identify those matters and questions that appear potentially problematic in terms of soundness.
- 4.7 The advice received from the Inspector was clear and constructive with advice being provided on how to further proceed in the preparation of the Core Strategies, the basic messages being:
- Core Strategies should tell a simple story What, Where, When, Who?
 - The Core Strategy is the place where difficult decisions must be taken
 - Role of the Core Strategy is to set realistic but flexible targets

Specific messages for Bromsgrove and Redditch were:

¹ Combined figure, between both Councils

- Both Core Strategies must be 'responsible' for the cross-boundary Growth.
- Evidence base needs to be in place to make decisions on cross-boundary growth location.
- Evidence should be collected and assessed on a joint basis and should be in place before either Core Strategy is submitted.
- There must be concurrent EiP's

4.8 ATLAS meeting

- 4.9 The Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) is sponsored by CLG and is part of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The advice they offer is independent, free of charge and is tailored to the needs of each specific participating authority.
- 4.10 Bromsgrove officers had approached ATLAS for assistance initially with plan making of Strategic site to the north/west of Bromsgrove town but with the intention of rolling this out to include the Redditch Growth issue.
- 4.11 Several meetings have taken place with ATLAS and a workshop was organised at Bromsgrove offices on 24th February. The event was well attended by around 20 people including representatives from GOWM, the County Council, Planning officers from Redditch BC and various professionals within BDC, including Planning, (Strategic Planning and Development Control), Strategic Housing, Economic Development and Environmental Health. The workshop fell into four main sections:
- Identifying the issues and opportunities for Bromsgrove
 - High level evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the town/district
 - Initial appraisal of potential strategic sites and broad locations for development
 - The importance of project management and adopting a Development Management approach
- 4.12 Positive verbal feedback was received at the end of the event and there appeared to be a consensus that it had been a very worthwhile and useful event. ATLAS has recently produced a draft Report of Outcomes from the workshop which summarises the events and observation findings. Atlas found that common themes emerged during discussions focussing on the vision/ aspirations for Bromsgrove, key objectives, the spatial options and key issues to be addressed, for example, in relation to infrastructure and delivery.
- 4.13 A subsequent meeting was held in Redditch to discuss ATLAS involvement with Strategic sites within Redditch and the cross boundary growth options. The outcome was that further involvement of ATLAS may be pursued when work is progressed to identify a specific site around/within Redditch. In the meantime ATLAS suggest that Redditch be involved in the specific project

within Bromsgrove, as this will provide opportunities for joint learning, which can be applied to site selection in relation to cross boundary options.

4.14 Joint Working

- 4.15 A meeting of the Joint Planning Advisory Panel took place on the 25th February 2010. An update on the joint consultation was provided together with information on the PINS and ATLAS meetings and proposed adjustments to the Local Development Schemes of both Authorities.
- 4.16 Joint working is also continuing at Officer levels, with regular meetings being held to progress the cross boundary issue.

4.17 Local Development Scheme

- 4.18 As a result of the recommendation of the WMRSS PINS Panel Report, that Redditch and Bromsgrove must align the timing of the Core Strategy preparation, (Paragraph 8.84)² adjustments to the Local Development Scheme must be made, as described elsewhere on your agenda.
- 4.19 “Proposed Changes” are still awaited from GOWM, which potentially adversely impact on the timing of the preparation of the Core Strategy.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 A further meeting of the Joint PAP is scheduled at 7pm on 14th April at Redditch’s offices.
- 5.2 Meetings are scheduled with Community Forums at both Redditch on 6th April and Bromsgrove on 15th April to consult on the Redditch Growth issue.
- 5.3 Responses received to the consultation will be jointly analysed by both authorities and the findings reported back to both Joint PAP and the LDFWP.
- 5.4 Joint working at officer level will continue in order to appraise the suitability of options and, as suggested by ATLAS, it is proposed to organise a stakeholder workshop to examine inter alia the deliverability of sites in terms of infrastructure provision.
- 5.5 Alongside the Redditch Growth issue, work on strengthening the evidence base continues, for example, gathering background information on Bromsgrove’s Strategic Sites, Cross Boundary sites, Green Infrastructure Study, commissioning of a joint Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and update on the Water Cycle Study.

² “it will be important for the Core Strategies of the three districts and particularly those of Redditch and Bromsgrove to be closely aligned in terms of their timetables and for there to be coordinated Examination of relevant aspects”.

- 5.6 In order to provide Members with the opportunity to discuss any of the above matters informally with Officers, such as, the growth requirements relating specifically to Bromsgrove, to Redditch or to wider issues relating to the whole District and the Core Strategy, the following “surgery/ drop- in” days have been scheduled: (further dates can be arranged on request)

16th April 2-4 pm Council Chamber

19th April 2-4 pm Committee room

21st April 6-8 pm Committee room

26th April 6-8 pm Committee room

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of receiving this report. The production of the leaflet has been carried out in-house and the costs of advertising, printing and postage have been shared between the two Councils from existing dedicated budgets. The joint level 2 SFRA and update on Water Cycle study will also be funded from existing dedicated budgets for the Core Strategy evidence base.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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 Economic Development

The Draft Core Strategy identifies the long term spatial vision for the district and this includes key areas such as economic development, The principle of sustainable development is central to the core strategy which involves the development of balanced communities with a mix of uses including for example employment. Therefore, in accordance with this theme options put forward in the leaflet include the development of employment in conjunction with housing development.

8.2 Objective 4 One Community

This consultation leaflet discusses the potential locations for Redditch growth, including new housing and employment in the future. It forms part of the extensive consultation which has been carried out as part of the development of the Core Strategy process. This consultation will be made widely accessible to Bromsgrove and Redditch communities alike.

8.3 Objective 5 Housing

A key component of the Redditch Growth issue being discussed in this leaflet is housing. However, this housing is to meet the growth needs of Redditch Borough rather than Bromsgrove.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

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 will 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. The joint consultation has used a variety of methods of communication in order to engage with as wide range of customers as possible.

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 In relation to the cross boundary issue much of the work generated has been produced in-house and as a joint exercise with Redditch Borough Council, this method of production represents a value for money approach. Ways to provide value for money by sharing costs are constantly being explored for example in commissioning a joint level 2 SFRA and update on Water Cycle study.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The issue of climate change is a central theme in the Core Strategy. Many of the policies have the potential to have a significant impact on mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change and contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions.

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 which directly impact on the environment.

15. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (Section 151) and Deputy Chief Executive	No
Executive Director – Planning, Regeneration and Housing Services	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services Executive Director –	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Planning and Regeneration	No
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

16. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

CONTACT OFFICER

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