

LDF Project Management Board 31th March 2011

Local Development Scheme – potential Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Report by Andy Foyne, Spatial Policy Manager

Purpose of report: To consider potential development plan documents and supplementary planning guidance to be undertaken in the future, the requirement for such plans and guidance and the resource implications as a precursor to detailed work to be undertaken on the Local Development Scheme

Recommendation: That Members consider the suggested Development Plan Documents and other documents for inclusion in the Local Development Scheme and provide a steer for its preparation

Background: The Local Development Scheme is down in the District Executive Forward Plan to be undertaken in June of this year. The Local Development Scheme is a 3 year project plan for forward planning and is a statutory requirement and set to remain so under the Government's localism bill. The existing Local Development Scheme was approved in September 2007 and is now considerably out of date and requires replacement.

An agenda item on the Project Management Board meeting on 4th March was deferred for a draft list of possible plan documents to be drawn up for consideration by the Board

Report

A list of possible Development Plan documents to undertake over the next three years from mid 2011 – mid 2014 has been forthcoming from discussions within the Spatial Policy Team and with Development Management Colleagues and with reference to Government guidance. These are set out below with a brief suggested justification with suggested highest priority documents indicated. It should be noted that whilst Supplementary Planning Documents are no longer required to be listed in the Local Development Scheme it is valuable to record them there to provide a comprehensive view of support documents needed for Development Management and a comprehensive view of forward planning work being undertaken.

1. Community Infrastructure (CIL) Charging Schedule (priority high)

This is a requirement to implement Community Infrastructure levy and is a list of justified charges for different types of development that must undergo viability testing and public consultation. Should CIL not be adopted (considered unlikely but a choice that members must address) some form of similar work will be required to implement a more tariff based planning obligation policy

2. Yeovil urban extension(s) area action plan – (priority high)

A requirement to develop the strategic location identified in the emerging Core Strategy into a detailed masterplan showing precise boundaries and land uses and their integration with transport, and required obligations associated with site specific development. The Planning Inspectorate "Best Friend" in interview at the start of the Core Strategy process indicated that an urban extension DPD would be required for taking the Core Strategy strategic location forward. The Eco Town Project has £130,000 reserved for consultant or other resource support for this work (due to government cuts this is around half the estimated requirement set out in the original bid)

3. Gypsy and Traveller Allocations Development Plan Document

A Requirement reflecting Government guidance in circular to provide for gypsy accommodation where there is an outstanding need. This could and perhaps should, given the peripatetic nature of gypsies and travellers, be undertaken at a county level. The Government's promise to withdraw the circular and the potential to provide for accommodation need in advance through planning consents mean that the requirement to undertake a gypsy and traveller DPD might be weakened in a year or two.

4. General Allocations DPD

This would be required to take forward the Strategic locations for growth identified in the Core Strategy to site specific proposals. The aspiration is that developer interest in the Core strategy formulation stage would lead to firm planning applications early in the post adoption period on market town sites and Rural Centre sites so obviating the need for a general allocations DPD. Should such interest not be forthcoming then an allocations DPD for both housing and employment could be beneficial in promoting market interest and giving community and developers certainty over growth proposals.

5. Town Centre boundaries and retail frontages DPD

Such a DPD would provide a review of existing boundaries and frontages that have now been in existence for some time and do not now necessarily reflect the market realities in our towns and rural centres. This DPD would serve to protect centres' retail and leisure opportunities to enable them to grow to reflect housing and employment growth in the settlements in question.

6. Renewable energy provision and off site allowable solutions Supplementary Planning guidance (SPG)

This SPG would help Development Management in implementing a new and initially more challenging aspect of development management

In addition to these prospective DPDs there are other policy documents requiring work and which would be itemised in the Local Development Scheme. Whilst not a DPD and not a document that the Spatial Policy Team would necessarily lead on; a Green Infrastructure Strategy is a document that is to be undertaken by the Council and would feed into the Core Strategy and its implementation.

The Localism Bill provides for Neighbourhood Plans coming forward from local communities. Whilst the Plans and the work required will be for the local communities to undertake there is a requirement for Local Planning Authorities to provide technical advice and support. This has yet to be detailed further but indicates a need to know what Neighbourhood Plans are forthcoming over the period of the Local Development Scheme and what assistance will be required. This is likely to be a significant area of work and is addressed further in the report on Neighbourhood plans on this agenda.

The current Local Development Scheme has three Area Action Plans for Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne earmarked for delivery after the Core Strategy. These have not featured in the list of suggested DPDs above as the current Yeovil Urban Development Framework has provided a planning framework for Yeovil Town Centre and retains relevance and is to be supplemented by the Urban Village masterplan. The abortive attempt to refresh it however might indicate the need to incorporate such a refresh within the Local Development Scheme. The Chard Regeneration Framework effectively provides the Chard Town Centre Action Plan and any Crewkerne town centre plan can be promoted by the Town Council.

The Annual Monitoring Report produced every year by the Council will still be required under the Localism bill and be part of the Local Development Scheme. A

review of what information is collected and how, given the demise of the Government Office system and Regional Assembly, is currently underway in time for incorporation into the Local Development Scheme report to District Executive in June.

There are clearly resource implications to the inclusion of DPDs and SPGs into the Local Development Scheme and these are to be worked on in the light of guidance from Members at this meeting as to which DPDs and SPGs they see as priorities. These resource implications will be assessed and incorporated into the Local Development Scheme report to District Executive in June. The Spatial Policy Team is not earmarked for a “lean review” in the year ahead and any future review would look at how to achieve substantive work in the most resource effective way.

Conclusions –

Members views are sought on the list of possible DPDs and SPGs above and other potential policy documents and their priority to inform the preparation of the Local Development Scheme. Other possible DPDs or SPGs not referred to but which members may seek are illicit.

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