

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

22 JULY 2010

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK UPDATE

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB 1983](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 7-16) – 12 March 2010

[CAB 1944](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 4-6) – 15 December 2009

[CAB 1908](#) - Winchester District Development Framework – Core Strategy Preferred Option – Feedback on Consultation (Chapters 1-3) - 20 October 2009

[CAB 1823](#) – Winchester District Development Framework – Recommended Core Strategy Preferred Option Document (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 25 March 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Since publication of the Core Strategy Preferred Option document in May/July 2009 and consideration by Members of the responses during late 2009/2010, there has been a major change in policy direction with the election of the new Government in May.

As of 6 July 2010 Regional Spatial Strategies have been revoked, removing a layer of strategic planning guidance. Whilst some elements of the South East Plan were not favoured by local communities, the strategy set out a range of policy guidance which no longer has any status, leaving the development plan for the Winchester District consisting only of the 2006 adopted Local Plan, alongside relevant Government planning policy statements.

The new Government sees the 'localism' agenda playing a key role in 'place shaping', but recent advice retains LDFs and in particular Core Strategies. The emphasis is now on local communities informing the emerging strategies in terms of the amount and type of development required.

This report explores the options for progressing the LDF given the amount of evidence and consultation that has been undertaken to date. This will require additional evidence and consultation particularly in relation to local housing requirements.

The additional work anticipated will create a potential delay of some 6 - 12 months before a draft Core Strategy would be ready to be formally submitted to Government.

An additional issue that has recently come into focus is the establishment of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) which, as of April 2011, will be the Planning Authority for LDF purposes. The SDNPA has announced its intention to have its own Core Strategy in place by 2014, but in the interim there is a need to consider the potential implications for planning policy in the National Park area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Members note the content of the report and in light of recent changes to the spatial planning system with the revocation of the South East Plan agree:-
 - not to proceed with publication of the Core Strategy in its current format in October 2010 as proposed in the agreed Local Development Scheme;
 - to retain and progress the Winchester Local Development Framework to consist of the Core Strategy (in the format set out in paragraph 6.6 of the report) and Development Management and Allocations Development Plan Document;
 - to agree to continue to be part of PUSH (assuming it continues as a local partnership) and to use the review of the PUSH Economic Strategy and associated work to update locally-derived housing and employment requirements for the PUSH part of the District;
 - to continue the development strategy for the PUSH part of the District proposed in the Core Strategy Preferred Option, of meeting large-scale housing requirements through strategic allocations in the 'South Hampshire Urban Areas' spatial area (including at West of Waterlooville and Whiteley);
 - to undertake research and consultation to determine the local housing needs and requirements for the 'Winchester Town' and 'Market Towns and Rural Area' parts of the District (including that part within PUSH);
 - to agree the indicative programme for LDF preparation for the remainder of 2010/early 2011 as set out in Section 7 of this report.

2. To note the position in relation to that part of the District that now lies within the South Downs National Park (and will as of 1 April 2011 fall within the remit of the South Downs National Park Authority for LDF purposes) and to work on the basis that this part of the District is likely to be dealt with in the City Council's LDF, pending clarification of the programme proposed for the Council's and the National Park Authority's LDFs.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the implications of the changes in policy that have taken place since the last meeting of the Committee on 12 March 2010 at which Members considered and agreed a number of recommendations in relation to the emerging Core Strategy.

1.2 The Council's LDF consists of the following documents:-

- The Winchester District Local Plan Review (adopted 2006) and a number of its policies which were 'saved' in June 2009 following consideration by the then Secretary of State, until they were replaced by a new DPD policy.
- Statement of Community Involvement – adopted January 2007
- Local Development Scheme – the most recent version was submitted to GOSE late 2009 and subsequently 'brought into effect' in February 2010. This identified the need to produce two key documents under the LDF
 - Core Strategy (to be adopted by December 2011)
 - Development Management and Allocations Development Plan Document (to be adopted during 2013)

1.3 However, with the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies on 6 July 2010, it is necessary for the Council to set out how it intends to deal with those matters for which there is no longer any regional policy (in particular the amount of housing that should be planned for in the District) and the impact this has on the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). The Government has indicated that where they propose to reconsider their position "*authorities should quickly signal their intention to undertake an early review so that communities and land owners know where they stand*". This report invites Members to confirm the City Council intentions in accordance with that advice.

1.4 In addition, from April 2011, the South Downs National Park Authority will become the sole local planning authority for the newly designated National Park, which covers a significant proportion of the Winchester District.

Therefore, this report provides an update on the options for the Park Authority to proceed with its new functions from an LDF perspective.

2 LDF Progress

2.1 Core Strategy - Core Strategy preparation to date has followed the regulations as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (these regulations were then subsequently amended during 2008 and 2009).

2.2 The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set the strategic pattern for growth and development across the whole District covering a twenty year period, including the location of very large sites at MDA/SDA level. Its main emphasis is on providing the long term spatial planning vision and objectives to ensure that development happens in the right place at the right time. It began preparation in 2006 and has been subject to a number of consultations, namely:-

- Front loading Jan/Feb 2007
- Issues and Options Jan/March 2008
- Preferred Option May/July 2009

2.3 In addition a range of technical evidence has been commissioned and used to justify policy approaches – see CAB2039(LDF) elsewhere on this agenda, which refers to LDF evidence, either completed or in progress. The Core Strategy links with other plans and strategies prepared by the Council and its partners, reflecting the desired outcomes of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy, emphasising the place-shaping role of the local authority.

2.4 Development Management and Allocations – the focus of this Development Plan Document (DPD) is to allocate all the non-strategic land use requirements across the District, in addition to expressing a range of development management policies adding detail to the strategic policies in the Core Strategy. The site allocations process began in 2007, with an invitation to landowners, developers and other interested parties to put forward potential development sites for consideration. Around 220 sites were submitted, for a variety of uses, mostly housing and employment. Of these, the housing sites proposed were published as part of the 2009/10 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This data is in the process of being updated, including consideration of additional sites submitted to the Council. All sites will be assessed to determine their suitability for development and those most suitable would, if required, be allocated for development in the DPD.

2.5 Work has commenced on the Development Management Policies with initial discussions with development management officers to determine which policies need to be retained and any 'policy voids' that now require policy guidance. The basis for this is the saved Local Plan policies and how these

need to be revised to address current spatial planning matters to be able to determine planning applications.

- 2.6 It was intended under the agreed LDS that this DPD would be 'published' under Regulation 27 in December 2011, following adoption of the Core Strategy, from which it would take its policy direction.

3 Change of Central Government

- 3.1 Since the new Government was elected in May this year a number of significant changes to the planning system have been announced and, in some cases, already implemented.

- 3.2 On 27 May 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government – Eric Pickles, issued a letter to local authorities highlighting the intention of the Government to '*rapidly abolish Regional Strategies and return decision making powers on housing and planning to local councils*'. The letter concludes with '*I expect Local Planning Authorities and the Planning Inspectorate to have regard to this letter as a material planning consideration in any decisions that they are currently taking*'.

- 3.3 On 6 July 2010 DCLG formally revoked Regional Spatial Strategies with immediate effect. (The DCLG statement released on 6 July is set out in full at Appendix A).

- 3.4 This statement and accompanying guidance reiterates the Government's emphasis on 'localism' as expressed in both the Coalition Agreement and the Conservative Party's Policy Green Paper 'Open Source Planning', published prior to the election:-

"The abolition of regional strategies will provide a clear signal of the importance attached to the development and application of local spatial plans, in the form of Local Development Framework Core Strategies and Development Plan Documents."

- 3.5 The guidance now issued by the DCLG (Appendix A) confirms the production of a Local Development Framework as the mechanism for every local planning authority to set out its spatial planning intentions and states "*LPAs should continue to develop LDF Core Strategies and other development plan documents, reflecting local people's aspirations and decisions on important issues such as climate change, housing and economic development.*" The guidance goes on to refer to a requirement for an evidence base and meeting the tests of soundness, which suggests the intention is to proceed with current procedural rules, albeit in a slightly modified form, given the revocation of the Regional Strategy.

- 3.6 With the demise of the South East Plan there is no longer any strategic level guidance as to the amount of housing growth districts should plan for, nor is there any formal role for County Councils. The guidance issued states "*Local Planning Authorities will be responsible for establishing the right level of local*

housing provision in their area, and identifying a long term supply of housing land without the burden of regional targets.” With regard to how the housing numbers may be determined, the guidance advises that people must be able to understand why decisions have been taken and that reliable information should be used to justify housing supply policies which can be defended during the LDF examination process, in line with PPS3.

- 3.7 The note also refers to the need to provide a 5 year supply of housing land consisting of deliverable sites determined through Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments, and being able to identify sufficient sites and broad areas of development to deliver the housing ambitions for at least 15 years from when the Plan (Core Strategy) is adopted. The key change from the previous system is that this is a 5 year land supply for the number of houses the Council establishes is needed – not an external target.
- 3.8 The development plan for the District now consists only of the 2006 adopted Local Plan, alongside relevant Government Planning Policy Statements (PPS). Whilst a number of the Local Plan Policies were ‘saved’, the Council decided not to retain some on the basis where there was more relevant guidance set out in the South East Plan – namely Policies DP6 (sustainable development), DP8 (flood risk) and DP15 (renewable energy). Pending more specific guidance in the emerging LDF on these policy areas, planning applications will now need to be considered against the relevant PPSs unless and until these are replaced with National Planning Guidance in due course. Appendix B illustrates which former policies of the Local Plan are now no longer covered by SE Plan Policies and the main PPSs that relate to them.
- 3.9 The following section of the report explores options for continuing with the LDF and the Core Strategy in the light of the changed circumstances.

4 Options to progress the Winchester LDF

- 4.1 The following options seem to be available to the Council based on the assumption that much of the public and stakeholder consultation and technical evidence that has been gathered so far can be used in re-examining growth proposals.
- 4.2 In considering options it is considered sensible to delineate the PUSH and non-PUSH areas of the District (see Section 5 below for issues relating to the area in the National Park where strategic planning will no longer be the responsibility of the City Council), as of April 2011.
- 4.3 The key reason for maintaining the PUSH and non-PUSH distinction is that the South East Plan housing numbers within the PUSH area were submitted by PUSH on behalf of all the participating authorities and were not modified by either the EIP or the Secretary of State. They are the numbers which the City Council generally supported through its membership of PUSH. They are, therefore, the ‘Option 1’ figures originally submitted by the local authorities, as

referred to at paragraph 12 of the recent guidance reproduced at Appendix A. This does not mean they cannot be modified now, and indeed PUSH is reviewing its Economic Strategy and is likely to suggest a modified overall number, but any changes would require justification.

4.4 In contrast, the housing numbers in the non-PUSH part of Winchester District were raised through the process of approving the South East Plan, against the wishes expressed by the City Council in its 'Option 1' submissions. These numbers are therefore contrary to the wishes of the City Council based on its expressed position. Again, this does not mean that the City Council cannot now reach a different view about the numbers, but it does mean that they have no prior endorsement.

4.5 The following options have therefore been considered:

Option 1:

4.6 Proceed with Core Strategy Preferred Option version and update and amend it to reflect the agreed 'recommended approaches' (see reports CAB 1908, 1944, 1983), to publish a revised 'publication' version under Regulation 27 by the end of 2010, and then proceed as quickly as possible to adoption. This option would be the quickest way to provide certainty and up-to-date policy coverage, which would be desirable given the 'ageing' Local Plan. To create a further delay in replacing strategic planning guidance has the risk of continuing to apply 'old' policy approaches for longer and an increasing number of appeals. However, this approach would require an acceptance of the former RSS housing figures as being the right amount of housing development for the District over a twenty year period, as a key role of the Core Strategy is to express the development strategy for the whole District and to identify how this is to be delivered through the allocation of 'strategic' sites.

Option 2:

4.7 Modify the Core Strategy on basis of existing evidence and consultation to create one document in 2 parts – a strategic element at front of document setting out the 'vision', 'objectives' and overall development strategy for each spatial area, (Winchester Town, Market Towns and Rural Area, and South Hampshire Urban Areas) plus any real strategic policies – then followed with a 'local plan' for each spatial area – this would include both strategic and non-strategic allocations in each of the 'local plans'. This would require further consultation before the Core Strategy could be submitted and would differ from the current concept of core strategies, which are intended to be confined to strategic matters. With regard to the housing requirement this could take the RSS figure as a guide, or identify and consult afresh on the need and possible location of housing development (informed by the SHLAA). It may also be necessary to commission research to establish a District-wide target through a new local housing market assessment.

4.8 Given the need for additional consultation and technical evidence this option would take some time to achieve but could be adapted to follow revised

Government guidance. In the short term however, there will be an increasing period of lack of up-to-date policy guidance with a heavy reliance on an aging Local Plan. This option would be based on the Core Strategy having more 'local' detail in it in terms of site allocations, but there will also be a need for a general Development Management Policies DPD to cover a whole range of development management matters that require District-wide policy guidance.

Option 3:

- 4.9 Consider creating 'profiles' for each settlement/neighbourhood/urban area as per the advice in 'Open Source Planning' – to promote local discussion based on economic, environmental and social elements. This would utilise the results from the Core Strategy front loading and the various workshops for issues and options, preferred option, sustainability appraisal and data from parish plans, market town health checks and results of CABE study*1 etc, to inform local 'profiles'.
- 4.10 Profiles already exist for level 1 and 2 settlements as these were created to inform the settlement hierarchy set out in draft Policy MTRA2. These could be expanded, to include a discussion around housing need and development aspirations (using SHLAA and other evidence) in a number of settlements across the District, including Winchester Town and the urban areas. This process would involve revisiting settlements and asking communities to consider how the issues already raised through previous consultations could now be dealt with, including the allocation of sites for housing or other development. This option would include specific development allocations for a range of land uses and development management policies, and would merge the Core Strategy and Development Management and Allocations DPD to form the basis of a replacement 'local plan'.
- 4.11 This approach would be resource intensive given the need for significant consultation and community participation and would generate a significant delay before a development plan document would be adopted to replace the adopted Local Plan. However it is clearly what the Government intends should be offered to those communities which feel strongly about the need to reconsider proposals that were contained in the South East Plan.

*1 The Council in partnership with East Hampshire District Council has recently been successful in bidding for funds under the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) 'Rural Masterplanning' programme, to be led by CABE. This will provide £15,000 of consultancy advice over the period 2009/2010 – 2010/2011 to help define the scale, nature and form of development which would be most appropriate for the various rural settlements, across both Districts.

- 4.12 It is clear from the statement at Appendix A that the spatial planning system in the form of Local Development Frameworks will continue, at least for the time being. The critical issue is that with the removal of regional housing requirements, there is now a need for the Council to decide whether to proceed on the basis of the former South East Plan housing requirements or to undertake its own review of housing needs. If the Council wishes to derive

its own housing requirements there is currently a gap in the data required to do this.

- 4.13 A further consideration is the Plan Period, which reflects the SE Plan by covering the period 2006 – 2026. With the removal of the housing targets and the period within which these were meant to be delivered, there is an opportunity to consider a revision to the Plan period. Government advice states that Core Strategies need to provide certainty for 15 years post adoption, given the changes to the LDF system and the inevitable delay that will result, it is suggested that consideration is given to extending the Plan period to 2031. This will require the District's housing requirement and associated trajectory to be extended, but this will provide more certainty to the development industry and stakeholders in planning for future investment.

PUSH Area

- 4.14 For the PUSH area, the housing requirement in the South East Plan was derived by the PUSH local authorities and was not changed through the process of examination and adoption of the SE Plan. It is therefore a locally-derived 'Option 1' figure.
- 4.15 It is the intention of the constituent authorities that PUSH will continue to coordinate the planning strategy for southern Hampshire and will update that strategy in conjunction with the update of its Economic Strategy. The Government has asked PUSH to show how it meets its objectives for promoting localism and, assuming it can do this to the Government's satisfaction, its funding and role seem likely to continue. This will provide the Council with an opportunity to be involved in developing the revised strategy for PUSH, including the apportionment of any housing requirements between the Districts.
- 4.16 Through its work and extensive consultation on the Core Strategy, the City Council had concluded that the large-scale housing allocations required in the PUSH area of the District should be met within what the Preferred Option defined as the 'South Hampshire Urban Areas'. The remainder of the PUSH area within the District was included within the 'Market Towns and Rural Areas' spatial area, given its similarities to other rural parts of the District. This approach received significant support and those opposing it did so mainly on the basis that this split wasn't specifically recognised in the SE Plan. With the revocation of the SE Plan it would be entirely appropriate to maintain this local approach, which reflects the characteristics of the District and the views of residents.
- 4.17 Within the South Hampshire Urban Areas part of the District, proposals for two strategic allocations at West of Waterlooville (2500 dwellings) and North Whiteley (around 3000 dwellings) were identified through the Council's emerging Core Strategy. Both these scheme are progressing with technical evidence and ongoing discussions with a range of stakeholders and the community, with a view to submitting planning applications during 2010 (Waterlooville) and 2011 (Whiteley).

- 4.18 Given the existing PUSH strategy and the initial indications from the review of its Economic Strategy, there is a strong case for retaining both of these proposed allocations.
- 4.19 In terms of the two Strategic Development Areas that were allocated through Policy SH2 of the South East Plan - North Fareham and North/North East Hedge End, their status as statutory requirements has changed with the revocation of the Regional Strategy. North Fareham was originally allocated for 10,000 new homes, but PUSH has recently agreed that this can be reduced to about 8000 dwellings with the recognition that the scheme may proceed as an eco-town. Given this, it is likely that Fareham Borough Council will retain this allocation and pursue this through its own Core Strategy and subsequent Area Action Plan for the SDA. The North/North East Hedge End SDA has been subject to a number of technical studies resulting in a feasibility report. At the time of writing, this was about to be published by PUSH and an oral update will be provided at the meeting.

Non-PUSH Area

- 4.20 As noted above there is now scope for the City Council to undertake a review of housing needs to produce a locally-derived housing requirement. This could reflect the spatial areas defined in the Core Strategy Preferred Option, namely 'Winchester Town' and the 'Market Towns and Rural Area'. As suggested above, the assessment of housing needs in the Market Towns and Rural Area would include the rural part of the District within PUSH.
- 4.21 With the designation of the South Downs National Park a large part of the District will come within the administrative area of the new South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The following section considers the issues this raises.

5 South Downs National Park Authority and the LDF

- 5.1 On 31 March 2010 the South Downs became Britain's newest National Park, covering over 1,600 km.sq. from the edge of Winchester to Beachy Head. The Park is also home to over 108,000 people and includes the towns of Petersfield, Midhurst and Lewes.
- 5.2 The Environment Act 1995 defined the purposes of National Parks as:
- conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage;
 - promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.
- 5.3 The National Park Authority (NPA) is the organisation set up to look after the National Park, and will work with partners to deliver the National Park purposes. In carrying out its work, the Authority also has a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities in the Park. From 1

April 2010 the shadow Authority set about making decisions on key strategies and policies and determining the resources needed to carry out its purposes and duty.

- 5.4 From 1 April 2011, the NPA will be the sole authority to deliver programmes, work with partners and take decisions as the Local Planning Authority (although discussions are ongoing in respect of some planning decisions being delegated to the district authorities – CAB2024 refers). At its meeting on 15 June 2010 the NPA agreed in relation to LDF work, to work in partnership with Local Authorities and to commence work on its own Core Strategy as soon as possible with a view to adoption by 2014.
- 5.5 The implication of this for Winchester District, is that if the Winchester Core Strategy was to be formally submitted to Government or even adopted by April 2011 and included that part of the District within the designated NP, there would neither be a requirement for the part of the Core Strategy covering the NP to be prepared in formal partnership with the NPA nor for the Core Strategy to be jointly adopted. If the Core Strategy were to be submitted after April 2011 (which now seems inevitable) this would involve progressing the Core Strategy through both Winchester's and the NPA's constitutional arrangements and for the NP and non-NP parts of the District to be clearly illustrated on the key diagram and adopted proposals map. This would provide policy coverage and continuity pending the NPA's preparation of its own Core Strategy, and is an approach the NPA supports if feasible.
- 5.7 Given the complexity of preparing joint documents, an alternative is to leave that part of the District that falls within the NP out of the Winchester LDF. This will then provide the opportunity for the NPA to prepare its own Core Strategy and development principles to its timeframe of having an adopted Core Strategy in place by 2014. An issue for Winchester is that if this approach is followed then potentially no further LDF work should be undertaken in those settlements/parishes within the NP (see plan at Appendix C), including the community research/consultation mentioned above to identify and determine local housing needs and solutions.
- 5.8 Another key issue is that, with the formal designation of the NP, Local Plan policies referring to the East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty can no longer be relied upon in isolation as this designation no longer has any formal status, although the principles of the policy may continue to be applied with caution given the equivalence of the AONB and NP in terms of landscape protection. This then creates something of a local policy vacuum as applications will need to be determined on the basis of policy guidance in PPS7 and Section 11 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. There is a degree of risk with this, but given that the part of the District that is covered by the NP is rural with a number of smaller settlements (Levels 3 and 4 of the draft Core Strategy's settlement hierarchy), development proposals tend to be small scale and local and to some extent will be covered by other remaining saved Local Plan policies, until replaced.

5.9 Given the danger of a local planning policy vacuum for the part of the District within the National Park, which could last until the adoption of the NPA's Core Strategy in 2014 (at the earliest), there could be merit in continuing to include this part of the District in a District-wide Core Strategy. However, if the programme for the Winchester Core Strategy was delayed to the extent that it would not be adopted much in advance of the NPA's Core Strategy it becomes very questionable whether the benefits of this approach outweigh the difficulties which may arise in trying to jointly progress a Winchester Core Strategy which includes part of the National Park. Therefore it is recommended that the situation is kept under review and a decision made, in consultation with the NPA, when the programmes for the Winchester and NPA Core Strategies have been firmed up.

6 Discussion

6.1 For the non-PUSH area there is insufficient justification to recommend accepting the South East Plan numbers as being locally derived. The City Council did not support the South East Plan's housing requirement for the non-PUSH part of the District and it is recommended that it should not proceed on the basis of this figure but should undertake work to determine the local housing need and community aspirations. On this basis it will not be possible to keep to the original timetable for Core Strategy production as set out in the agreed LDS, which refers to Publication in October/November 2010 followed by Submission in January 2011.

6.2 Options 2 and 3 above both utilise existing research and consultations, but will require additional time to establish revised housing and employment requirements, resulting in the Core Strategy slipping in its programme by at least some 6-12 months. Whilst the Government clearly envisages such delays occurring, it would be prudent to minimise them. Option 3 comes closest to engaging local communities fully in the creation of a new spatial plan for the non-PUSH area.

6.3 This also provides the opportunity to work jointly with Winchester Town Forum to revise its 'Vision for Winchester' to establish the development requirements necessary over the next 20 years to ensure that Winchester Town remains an attractive place, but also offers opportunities for residents and businesses to live and do business in a sustainable environment. This is crucial to understanding what the aims and objectives of spatial planning decisions are designed to achieve.

6.4 A revised Core Strategy can then be developed taking account of this consultation prior to formal publication under Regulation 27 during 2011. It is not yet possible to establish a revised programme for the production of these documents, as work is still needed to programme the proposed work and consultation and there may yet be further clarification from Government of any changes to procedural arrangements. It will, however, be important not to go back to 'square one' in engaging with local communities, given the substantial front-loading and consultation which has already been undertaken.

Consultation should, therefore, be focussed on housing issues, albeit recognising the important links with other matters, particularly economic issues.

- 6.5 It is essential that there is strategic guidance and direction for the Winchester District in place as soon as possible to ensure that as a whole it is delivering sustainable development and that the 'vision' is not lost in a plethora of smaller 'local plans'. There is also the need to ensure that the relationship between the LDF and the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy is maintained to demonstrate that the Council is progressing and implementing its place shaping role.
- 6.6 Given the indication that the LDF will be retained - albeit there will be the need to maintain some flexibility so to be able to adapt quickly and seamlessly to a revised planning system - then the following course of action is recommended:-
- Maintain preparation of two Development Plan Documents as identified in the LDS but to an amended timescale (to be determined):-
 - a) Core Strategy DPD
 - b) Development Management and Allocations DPD
 - Set out in the Core Strategy a clear District-wide vision and series of spatial planning objectives linking with the Sustainable Community Strategy, together with 'key' strategic policies; allocate key sites required to deliver the vision; continue with the preparation of an infrastructure delivery plan and other evidence as necessary, including work to determine the local housing requirements over the Plan period
 - For each of the three spatial areas of the District set out in the Core Strategy (Winchester Town, Market Towns and Rural Area, South Hampshire Urban Areas) – create a series of 'local' visions and a set of local strategic policies, including the identification and allocation of key strategic sites for development. For the PUSH area the vision should be that agreed by PUSH, modified through the Council's participation in the review of the PUSH Economic Strategy.
 - Undertake further community consultation to discuss 'local' issues, particularly the need for and amount of housing, to generate a series of settlement 'profiles' to inform policy preparation; use SHLAA evidence to suggest and discuss potential sites, but for these to be allocated in the Development Management and Allocations DPD.

7 Suggested Timeframe

7.1 July 2010 – March 2011

- Continue to complete outstanding pieces of the evidence base (see CAB 2039(LDF))
- Commission new pieces of evidence as required (see CAB 2039(LDF))
- Update the Core Strategy Preferred Option to take into account the 'Recommended Approaches' as agreed by CAB 1823; 1908; 1944 (LDF)
- Create 'profiles' for larger settlements in the District to inform their role in spatial planning for the District and their immediate local area, in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority and taking account of the CLG Rural Masterplanning work on settlement hierarchies.
- Commence liaison with town and parish councils to request their assistance with completion of the 'profiles'.
- Programme a period of public involvement to build on existing feedback from earlier stages of Core Strategy preparation to establish local solutions to the issues already raised and any new ones emerging i.e. housing requirements, in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority.
- Analyse the results of the community consultation to develop a revised development strategy and associated policies
- Continue to liaise with stakeholders and infrastructure providers to establish deliver mechanisms for emerging policy framework and inform the infrastructure delivery plan and strategic allocations
- Continue to maximise opportunities for involvement and participation through partners meetings and events i.e. LSP, NPA.

7.2 April 2011 – June 2011

- Prepare a revised Core Strategy in accordance with any published amended regulations/legislation and the results of the work and consultation above and undertake as necessary consultation on the revised document

7.3 July 2011 – September 2011

- Formally publish the Core Strategy under Regulation 27 prior to submission

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 This report highlights a number of critical issues to pursuing the Council's LDF over the next year or so. Whilst the changes made to the planning system by the new Government were to some degree anticipated through the early statements made both before and immediately after the election, it is

reassuring that for the time being the LDF system is to be retained and Core Strategies and other development plan documents pursued.

- 8.2 The key issues for Winchester are the need to establish local housing requirements in light of the revocation of the South East Plan, together with any other local targets as deemed necessary through the evidence base.
- 8.3 Given the recommended continuation with Core Strategy preparation albeit to an amended timetable, it will be necessary to work in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority to collect evidence for that part of the District that as of April 2011 will fall within the jurisdiction of the National Park Authority for LDF purposes. A decision will need to be made in due course as to whether Winchester's Core Strategy should continue to include that part of the National Park within the District (which would require it to be jointly progressed with the National Park Authority), or whether the National Park area should be excluded from Winchester's LDF.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

9 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

- 9.1 As part of progressing effective spatial planning of the District, the Core Strategy is one of the key implementation mechanisms for the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy. To this extent the Core Strategy reflects the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy and strategic planning policies have been expressed to cover these where there is a land use planning requirement for their delivery. It is envisaged even through the revised planning regime that this element will continue to be a core requirement of any replacement LDF.

10 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 10.1 The key resources for undertaking work on the LDF have been approved as part of the budget process. However, recent budget difficulties have resulted in some of the budget provision being removed. In particular a one-off £50,000 budget funded by LABGI was removed as a saving for 2010/11, and additionally vacant posts frozen for one year contributed a further saving of £45,000.
- 10.2 The opening balance of the LDF earmarked reserve in 2010/11 was £133,000. This has associated spending plans and is forecast to be fully utilised by the end of 2012/13. This incorporates spending plans against the baseline consultancy budget of £93,700 per annum.
- 10.3 If there are future requirements for further reductions given the continued budget pressures, this has the potential to impact on the Council's ability to

progress its LDF and its programme, and this will need to be taken into account in future discussions about the Council's budget.

- 10.4 The nature and scale of the LDF will continue to require shared resources in terms of utilising skills and expertise from other Divisions within the Council. This is now even more critical given the emphasis on localism, and it is envisaged that delivery and viability of development schemes will continue to be an issue.
- 10.5 Meetings of the Cabinet (LDF) Committee can be serviced from within existing resources in the Democratic Services Division.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 11.1 The Council's Local Development Scheme was approved by Government Office for the South East late 2009 and 'brought into effect' at Cabinet on 3 February 2010 (CAB1969 refers). Given the recent views of the new Government there is a degree of uncertainty about how the LDF system will continue in the longer term. This report outlines a pragmatic approach that gives the Council some flexibility to mix and match elements of both evidence and consultation that has been undertaken so far. However, the emphasis on 'localism' will require additional consultation and research on very specific 'local' issues that may not have been raised in the past.
- 11.2 A greater risk to the Council in the short term is the issue of an ageing Local Plan and possible lack of local housing need data on which to base decisions about residential development. This could result in an increasing number of appeals which will require additional resources to defend.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

DCLG statement 6 July 2010 (Appendix A)

APPENDICES:

Appendix A : DCLG statement 6 July 2010

Appendix B : Former Local Plan Policies no longer covered by SEP Guidance

Appendix C: Map illustrating the extent of the South Downs National Park in the District