

REPORT TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Report No.13

Date of Meeting	11th September 2008			
Title of Report	The North Wiltshire Local Development Framework, the future Wiltshire-wide LDF and the South West Regional Spatial Strategy – An Update.			
Link to Corporate Priorities	The production of the Local Development Framework, the Transition to the new Authority and all related priorities.			
Public Report	Yes			
<p>Summary of Report</p> <p>This Committee wished to be informed of the progress on the Local Development Framework and the Regional Spatial Strategy with a view towards stating where and how members will be involved over the next year given the current suspension of the LDF.</p> <p>It reminds Members that the formal production of the main LDF documents for the North Wiltshire Area was suspended earlier this year, though work has continued in preparation for the new Local Development Framework for Wiltshire as a whole.</p> <p>New Regulations are expected to be in place shortly which transfers responsibility for the LDF from this District Council to Wiltshire County Council via the Implementation Executive, to take effect prior to 1st April 2009.</p> <p>Progress on the Wiltshire-wide LDF has been made and a Report will shortly be presented to the Implementation Executive setting out the intended programme of work.</p> <p>Modifications to the South West Regional Spatial Strategy have been published with a consultation period that ends on the 17th of October. Whilst the analysis is not yet complete, a partial summary of its contents insofar as it affects North Wiltshire is included as an appendix. The full details can be found here: http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=4145</p>				
<p>Officer Recommendations -</p> <p>That the Report be noted.</p>				
Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.				
Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Since the announcement in July 2007 of the move towards a unitary Council for Wiltshire, the implications on the development of long term planning strategies and policies within North Wiltshire have been obvious. To date, members of North Wiltshire District Council have been involved in the process of developing this Framework and in following the future implications of unitary status principally through Members participation in the Spatial Planning Advisory Group.
- 1.2 This Council, like other Districts, is therefore within a transitional period from the old process of delivering LDFs to a new process yet to be determined.

2. The Move from Our Local Development Framework to Another

- 2.1 Since January 2008, senior managers of the Spatial Planning service across Wiltshire have formed a Project Team under the stewardship of Wiltshire County Council and have been meeting to consider how best to move towards a Wiltshire-wide Local Development Framework. This has included detailed analysis of the work of each team and the degree to which this work can either be used to develop a Wiltshire-wide planning framework or to continue existing LDF work. For example, it was agreed that the Salisbury Core Strategy work which was at an advanced stage should be progressed towards adoption, that consultation work on Kennet District Council's Core Strategy would be useful to a new Wiltshire Core Strategy and that the consultation work already completed on North Wiltshire District Council's Core Strategy could be fed into the process.
- 2.2 At the same time, the Project Team have been developing a Local Development Scheme, otherwise known as a project plan, to set out which new planning documents should be prepared by the new Wiltshire Authority. Under Regulations due to be published in the autumn, the Implementation Executive for the new Wiltshire Authority will take over responsibility for the delivery of the LDF.
- 2.3 The consequence is that there are no plans to engage other Members in the LDF process beyond that that is committed in those Authorities where LDF work is still progressing. In the case of North Wiltshire, the only work of this nature was completed with the ending of the consultation on the Gypsy and Traveller Site Search consultation earlier this summer.

3. The Wiltshire Local Development Scheme

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report, the new project plan to deliver a Wiltshire Local Development Framework is still work in progress. It is intended to complete this in time to report a draft of the LDS to the Implementation Executive at its meeting on September 23rd 2008. This is required if the IE is to meet the deadline contained within the draft Regulations for the submission of the final Local Development Scheme document by the end of this year.
- 3.2 When those Regulations are in place, present Members of NWDC will no longer have a statutory role in the LDF process and it will for the IE to consider how best to involve existing members in the process of developing the LDF. In reality, little that will require formal consultation will have been completed by 1st April 2009. After that date, it will be for the new Council, elected in May 2009, to determine how Members will be so involved.

4. The South West Regional Spatial Strategy

- 4.1 The South West Regional Spatial Strategy is a statutory Planning document prepared by the South West Regional Assembly in co-operation with County and Unitary Authorities across the south-west and in consultation with the public. It has reached the stage where a Panel of Inspectors have produced their Report which was submitted to the Secretary of State in December last year and in response the Modifications to the RSS have been published for public consultation purposes.
- 4.2 Appendix 1 includes a summary prepared by the Spatial Planning team of the Modifications insofar as they affect this District. Full details can be found on the South West Regional Assembly's website:
http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/ngcontent.cfm?a_id=4145
- 4.3 There remains, at the time of writing this report, some additional analysis work to be undertaken by the Spatial Planning team in respect of the Gypsy and Traveller issues raised in the modified draft RSS.
- 4.4 The consultation period ends on the 17th of October 2008. It is open to Members to submit individual responses. A report will be placed before this Council's Executive to recommend such responses to the content of the document as appropriate. This is likely to be placed before the meeting of the Executive on 2nd October 2008.

5. Other Activities Related to the Transition to the new Wiltshire Authority

- 5.1 It should be noted that responsibility for delivering the Local Development Framework in the new Authority will lie within the new Economy and Enterprise directorate. A new Service Director for this area has been appointed. It is not known at the time of writing when that individual will take up the position formally, but it can be expected that the responsibility will be transferred as soon as possible.
- 5.2 In the meantime, there is a considerable amount of preparatory work to complete. In particular, the Spatial Plans team here in North Wiltshire have been working on specific advice documents in anticipation that there will be pressure over the forthcoming months for major planning applications to come forward, now that the Modifications to the RSS have been published.
- 5.3 There are a number of important issues to be resolved also in the forth-coming months. The structure of the new Economy and Enterprise directorate will need to be completed, appointments to relevant posts will need to be made and a location or locations for the new service will need to be settled. It can also be anticipated that there will be a certain level of staff turnover during this period.

6. Financial, Legal, Community and Human Resources Implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. There is work currently in progress towards defining the available budget for LDF work. This will be part of the current budget setting process of the Wiltshire County Council.
- 6.2 There are legal implications concerning the fundamental matters contained in this report. There will be new Regulations in place which will transfer the responsibility of the LDF service from this District to the County Council via the Implementation Executive. This Council will no longer have the role it previously had in such matters.

- 6.3 There are no direct community or equalities implications arising from this report.
- 6.4 There are Human Resources implication but all are part of the normal Transition process of transferring staff to the new Authority.

Appendices:	Summary of Content of the Modifications of the Regional Spatial Strategy
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	None

Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
Draft Annual Report	O&S 12 th June 2008	O11
South West Regional Spatial Strategy	O&S 17 th July 2008	O12