

Agenda Item 7

Forward Planning
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Report

Subject : Salisbury and South Wiltshire – Our place in the future. Consultation
Report to : The Cabinet
Date : Wednesday 11 July 2007
Author : Sarah Hughes, Senior Planning Officer
Cabinet Member for Planning: Councillor Paul Clegg

Report Summary:

To inform councillors of the corporate consultation, 'Salisbury and South Wiltshire – Our place in the future', and seek approval for the consultation period to start.

The Proposal:

The new planning system of 'Local Development Frameworks' that is replacing the old system of local plans is divided into a series of documents. One of the key documents is the Core Strategy, which sets out the overarching principles that development in the district will need to conform to. It will also establish the number of houses and the amount of employment land that the District will need to provide and will reinforce the message of sustainable communities and identify broadly where development will be directed. As part of this new process, officers have been gathering evidence to see what are the key issues facing the district and put forward a range of options to tackle them. This first stage of public consultation relates to these 'Issues and Options'.

There are a number of key corporate projects that are coming up for major consultation at the same time. In addition to the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy, the preferred options of the Salisbury Vision require consultation in July. The decision has been made to take the opportunity to refresh the Community Plans, which will have the added benefit of drawing together the various documents and maximising synergies.

Each of the elements to this consultation exercise asks people what they want for their future. With the exception of the Vision, the consultation exercise is not constrained by narrow choices. Both the Community Plan and Core Strategy are fundamental to the future of our communities and the alignment of these projects has a number of benefits, the main ones being:



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



- It is a good opportunity to ask the community in a comprehensive manner what they want to see in the future;
- The consultation will accord with best practice and Government Guidance - *Planning Together Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide*;
- The consultation can ensure the essential tests of soundness are passed;
- The consultation will comply with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and all other adopted procedures, including the Wiltshire Compact;
- The consultation is an opportunity to break down traditional barriers between service areas, pool skills and ensure there is a consensual and consistent approach to consultation techniques;
- By bundling up consultation it will avoid a piecemeal approach and resultant consultee fatigue;
- The consultation can ensure best value and realise economies of scale.

The title given to the consultation initiative is *Salisbury and South Wiltshire - Our Place in the Future*. If Cabinet approves the document, public consultation will commence on 26th July for a period of 10 weeks ending on Friday 5th October. Cabinet will be consulted during the consultation period at the 5th September meeting, where detailed comments on the content of the document will be able to be made.

A report on the vision is currently circulating all area committees and scrutiny panel. The minutes from these meetings will be made available prior to the meeting

The Consultation:

The consultation will be very comprehensive and will be fully compliant with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. It will encompass a range of techniques involving a media strategy, publicity, leaflets, direct notification, use of new technologies and neighbourhood forums, as set out below.

The document represents a genuine opportunity for communities to have their say prior to the council taking any decisions. The government requires that the document is framed in a manner that identifies the key issues affecting the district and presents a range of options for tackling them.

The light, magazine style format is an attempt to make a very complex process, easy to understand and as accessible as possible.

This is a major consultation, and to reach as many members of society as possible, a number of techniques need to be used. They include:

Direct Consultation

The 'Consultation pack' which will include a covering letter, CD ROM of documents, self addressed envelope, response form and summary leaflet. These will be A4 in size. The pack will be sent to all consultees on the LDF database, all councillors, all parish council's and statutory consultees.

Technical consultative group

This will include representatives from bodies such as the Environment Agency, English Heritage, Natural England, utility companies etc. The first panel will take place during the consultation period.

Public Exhibitions

It is anticipated that public exhibitions will be held at the following locations:

Victoria Hall, Tisbury	31 st July 2007
Guildhall, Salisbury	9 th August 2007
Antrobus House, Amesbury	13 th August 2007
Jubilee Hall, Downton	20 th August 2007
Lecture Theatre, Mere	28 th August 2007

Michael Herbert Hall, Wilton

3rd September 2007

All the exhibitions will take place from 8am to 8pm.

The exhibition will use display boards. There will also be an opportunity for the public to look through the consultation documents. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

Drop in sessions will also be held with other District council departments, with the dates being confirmed once other arrangements have been finalised.

Area Committees

It is anticipated that area committees will be consulted on the following dates;

City Area Planning Committee	2 nd August 2007
Southern Area committee	9 th August 2007
Western Area Committee	16 th August 2007
Northern Area Committee	23 rd August 2007

Parish Councils

All Parish Councils have been asked whether they would like a Forward Planning officer to attend a parish council meeting

Indirect notification

An advert will be placed towards the front of the Salisbury and Amesbury Journals, the Blackmore Vale Magazine and the Avon Advertiser, to inform people of the consultation. The Leader and Portfolio Holders for Planning and Economic Development have also been asked to undertake a press launch to raise the profile of the consultation exercise.

Posters will be placed on parish notice boards, as well as in strategic locations around Salisbury and Amesbury.

Leaflet

A summary leaflet will be produced, which will be left in key places around the district, for example in pubs, railway stations and shops.

Citizen Panel

The citizen panel will be used. Discussions have been undertaken as to the form this will take.

Focus groups

Focus groups are currently being set up. They will be organised on a themed and will take place throughout the consultation period.

Hard to Reach Groups

A list of organisations has been produced in consultation with Community Initiatives.

Schools / young people

It is proposed to have a tailored questionnaire on the 'Yeah but' website, specifically aimed at teenagers. All secondary schools in the district will be contacted to see if, as part of their IT lessons, this website can be featured and students encouraged to fill in the questionnaire.

Web pages

All the documents will be available on the website. The main document will be interactive with respondents able to submit their responses via the web.

FAQs

These will be put together once the issues and options paper has been finalised.

Recommendation:

That Cabinet endorses 'Salisbury and South Wiltshire - Our Place in the Future' for public consultation for 10 weeks, starting on 26th July 2007. A report will be brought back to Cabinet in due course outlining the outcomes of the consultation.

Appendices:

Salisbury and South Wiltshire - Our Place in the Future
Salisbury and South Wiltshire - Our Place in the Future Questionnaire - to follow in advance of the Cabinet meeting.

Background Papers:

Topic papers on the following subjects:

Agriculture	Infrastructure
Biodiversity	Planning obligations
Conservation	Pollution and waste management
Delivery and implementation	Retail
Design	Settlement strategy
Flooding	Supporting communities
Housing	The economy
Tourism and leisure	Transport

Vision for Salisbury - Area development framework, final report April 2007.
Statement of Community Involvement, adopted December 2006.
Wiltshire compact, Code of Practice on Communication and Consultation, September 2005.
Wiltshire compact, Code of Practice on Equality and Diversity, September 2005.
Salisbury District Council, Communications Strategy 2004 – 2007.

Implications:

Legal: None

Financial: None

Personnel: None

Environmental: None

Human Rights: None at this stage

Council's Core values: Excellent Service; Fairness and Equality; open, learning Council and a willing partner; communicating with the public; supporting the disadvantaged.

Consultation Undertaken: The vision has already been subject to a public consultation exercise. The Core Strategy issues and options report is being written with inputs from key consultees. This is the start of the formal consultation process.

Parish Affected: All