

Report

Report subject: Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework: Consultants final report and consultation process
Report to: Planning and Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel
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1.0 Background and history

- 1.1 In December 2004 Cabinet approved the development of a Vision of Salisbury as a key project for 2005. In July 2005 Cabinet agreed an outline timetable and gave authority to prepare a consultant's brief. In September 2005 Cabinet approved funding for the development of the Salisbury Vision and a team of consultants were appointed in February 2006. The South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and Wiltshire County Council (WCC) provided additional funding for the project.
- 1.2 The principal objective of the Vision, as set out in the consultants' brief was to 'prepare Salisbury to meet future challenges whilst doing everything possible to protect its uniqueness and character'. Effectively the consultants were commissioned to produce a masterplan for the development of the city of Salisbury over the next 15-20 years. The area to be covered by the Vision project was defined as the business and retail core of the city. Within this area four sites were identified as specific priorities.
- o Churchfields Industrial Estate
 - o Southampton Road
 - o Salisbury Guildhall, Guildhall Square and Market Place
 - o The Maltings and central car park
- 1.3 Consultants were appointed in February 2006 and a steering group was established to manage and oversee their work. The steering group comprised officers and councillors (representing all of the political groups) from Salisbury District Council together with an officer and councillor from Wiltshire County Council and representatives from the SWRDA, the Learning and Skills Council and a number of local partner organisations. The Leader of Salisbury District Council led the group.
- 1.4 The development of the Vision was undertaken in three distinct stages:
- o Baseline analysis and review
 - o Options development
 - o Development of the preferred options



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- 1.5 Baseline analysis and review: This stage took place between March and June 2006 and it concentrated on identifying the key issues, significant constraints and potential opportunities. The key issues examined were:
- urban design,
 - landscape and visual issues,
 - planning, socio-economic issues,
 - a review of the retail, residential,
 - office and industrial markets,
 - transport,
 - environmental conditions and the ecology of the Vision area.

From this, a list of emerging themes was identified:

- the environment,
- the city as a place to live in, visit and work in,
- and the historic city.

This led to the development of an overall theme of Salisbury as a sustainable city.

- 1.6 Options development: This stage set out a long list of options for change; for the city and for each of the four priority areas. Each option included a detailed description, a rationale and an identification of the key issues. A shortlist of options, based on their capacity to meet the Vision objectives and on a realistic assessment of their deliverability was produced. This shortlist was then set out within three different approaches or levels of intervention – consolidation, enhancement, step change. These were tested through a detailed consultation process, which resulted in there being a clear consensus in favour of the ‘step change’ option. The options development stage was completed by October 2006.
- 1.7 Development of the preferred options: A set of preferred options based on the step change scenario was considered by the steering group in December 2006. These were worked-up by the consultants and a draft Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework was presented in January 2007. This draft document summarised the work that had gone into the development of the Vision, it reiterated the Vision’s objectives and it established a set of design principles, which underpinned the Vision proposals. Following a detailed response from the steering group to this document, the consultants delivered their final Salisbury Vision document in April 2007.
- 1.8 Throughout the development stage of the Vision the consultants carried out a full and varied programme of consultation. This is summarised below (all dates were in 2006). Further, more comprehensive, details can be found in the Summary Report of Community Involvement, which can be accessed via the council’s website.
- Public drop-in events and exhibitions: May and September
 - Forum workshops: May, June and October
 - St Edmunds community meeting: July
 - Council officers: July and August
 - Councillors: August
 - Businesses: August, September, October and November
 - Commuters and park and ride users: July
- 1.9 The completed Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework (ADF) will form part of a Salisbury and Wilton Area Action Plan (AAP), which feeds into the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF).

2.0 Salisbury Vision final report

2.1 The consultants' final Salisbury Vision report is available on the council's website and on the CD ROM that has been given to all councillors. This section provides a very brief summary of the key proposals.

2.2 The report describes a picture of Salisbury in the future and how people will live, work and spend their leisure time in an attractive and historic setting. The central theme of the Vision is focused on sustainability and how this relates to every facet of the social, economic and environmental agenda. It is a Vision for the city, which is based on the concept of sustainability; a Vision for a city in the future which is identified by the following qualities:

- Ecofriendly
- Sustainable
- Accessible
- Diverse
- Unique
- Safe and attractive
- Inclusive

2.3 To achieve this Vision for Salisbury the final report sets out five design principles that form the foundations upon which the Vision's proposals are built. These design principles are:

Improved connectivity

- Making it easier to move around, across and within the city by public transport, cycle, on foot and by car

Recognising gateways and arrival points

- Ensuring that people coming into the city are excited and impressed; that the key arrival points are attractive and that they fulfil their role as gateways to the city

High quality public realm

- Creating an attractive place with high quality public spaces as befits a city with Salisbury's unique setting and heritage

Revealing the natural assets

- Making the most of the city's rivers and bringing more green into the centre

Celebrating the built assets

- Ensuring that the city's historic character is respected and enhanced

2.4 The Vision's proposals are contained within 24 specific projects which themselves are grouped under three overall strategies.

Transport and movement strategy

- Traffic management
- Public transport
- Station interchange
- Southampton Road
- Parking management

Development strategy

- Central car park and Maltings
- Guildhall and Guildhall Square
- Salt Lane
- Brown Street
- Old Manor Hospital
- Bus station
- Churchfields Industrial Estate
- Eastern gateway (Southampton Road)
- The Friary
- Bus depot
- Chipper Lane/Scotts Lane

Public realm strategy

- The Market Place
- Fisherton Square
- Salisbury Chequers
- Harnham Eco Park
- The Green Necklace
- Confluence Park
- Park Art
- Churchill Gardens

2.5 A brief explanation of each of the projects is given in appendix A.

3.0 Salisbury Vision delivery stage – current and developing work

- 3.1 During the development stage and in the transition to the delivery stage, much work has been done to increase the profile of the Salisbury Vision project and to raise the credibility of the council to deliver it. There is now a large degree of support for the Salisbury Vision particularly within the business community and a high expectation that the council will fulfil its leadership role in delivering the project's benefits.
- 3.2 The consultants' final report was accepted by the steering group on 26 April 2007. This marks the end of the development stage of the Salisbury Vision and the beginning of the delivery stage. To assist in the delivery of the Vision a new steering group has been established. Its principal role is to oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Salisbury Vision delivery plan. Details of their full remit, composition and of the Vision reporting structure are given in appendix B.
- 3.3 Small sub-groups are also being established, each with a responsibility to take forward specific projects or groups of projects. These will be officer led but their membership can include councillors and representatives from external organisations. To date six such groups have been set up and a further two are being scoped. The groups already established are:
- Churchfields Industrial Estate
 - The central car park and Maltings (to include the Fisherton Square and Confluence Park projects)
 - The Guildhall and Guildhall Square
 - Bus depot
 - Public transport
 - Parking management
- 3.4 Effective project management has played an important role in the development of the Salisbury Vision and it is now seen as key to the success of its delivery. In their final report the consultants consider that highly effective project management is essential if we are to keep the momentum going and if we are to successfully manage and coordinate the wide range of development management tasks that the project is made up of. This was acknowledged by Cabinet, when in March 2007 approval was given for the establishment of the post of Salisbury Vision project manager. The postholder's main responsibility is to manage and coordinate the work of the various sub-groups and to ensure that each particular element of the project, and the Vision overall, is delivered on time and on budget. Recruitment for this post is currently on hold pending further discussions.
- 3.5 The Salisbury Vision is one of the council's most complex and multi-faceted projects and it is anticipated that officers from all of the council's service units will be working on specific elements of it at one time or another. An officer working group has, therefore, been set up to aid communication and to make sure that any problems and interdependencies are identified early. This group will also help to further ensure that individual projects are moving in the same direction and that work on them is fully complementary.
- 3.6 In moving into the delivery stage of the Salisbury Vision a number of other key pieces of work have been completed or are in the process of being developed. These include a draft delivery plan, a draft communications plan, protocols for dealing with developers and an overall communications protocol. The completion of a Project Initiation Document (PID) and a full risk assessment of the project's delivery stage will be completed following the appointment of the project manager.

4.0 Salisbury Vision delivery stage – governance arrangements

- 4.1 Each project sub-group will provide progress reports on their specific areas of activity to the steering group. The project manager will also report to the steering group on the project's overall progress. All reports will be made in accordance with the council's corporate project management framework and as such will include updates on the project's risk register and performance against key milestones.
- 4.2 The steering group will report to the Cabinet as appropriate. Cabinet will be responsible for making major decisions relating to the delivery of the Salisbury Vision, where such decisions are in line with the council's overall policies and budget. Decisions that are outside the council's budget or policy framework will be referred to Full Council.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 As part of the delivery stage it is important that that we further consult on the final Vision proposals. There is also a requirement for the council to consult on the Issues and Options of the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework and a need to refresh the Community Strategy. Within each of these separate pieces of consultation there is a requirement to broadly ask people what they want for their future and in their own way each element is fundamental to the future of the communities of Salisbury and south Wiltshire. There are clearly a number of benefits that can be realised by co-ordinating the consultation process; the main ones being:
- It is a unique moment in time and a great opportunity to ask the community what they want to see in the future
 - It accords with best practice and Government Guidance - *Planning Together Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide*
 - It can ensure we pass the essential tests of soundness
 - We can ensure that consultation complies with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and all other adopted procedures including the Wiltshire Compact.
 - It is an opportunity to break down traditional barriers between service area, pool skills and ensure there is a consensual and consistent approach to consultation techniques
 - By bundling up consultation we can avoid a piecemeal approach and fatigue.
 - We can ensure best value and realise economies of scale.
- 5.2 It has, therefore been agreed to hold a single consultation exercise. This will take place in July and run through until September. The working title for this initiative is:

Salisbury and South Wiltshire - Our Place in the Future

- 5.3 Ahead of this public exercise it is important that the Salisbury Vision final report is subjected to the council's internal formal consultation and scrutiny processes; that councillors are given a further opportunity to influence and shape the final Vision document before it goes out for public consultation. Throughout June and early July the final report is, therefore, being presented to all of the council's Area Committees and Overview and Scrutiny Panels. The report will then be presented to Cabinet on 11 July together with all of the comments received through this process.

6.0 The role of Salisbury District Council

- 6.1 During the development stage of the Salisbury Vision the district council has been the lead client working with the group of consultants. The council has also been a major funder of the project. Our principal partners are the South West Regional Development Agency and Wiltshire County Council. The consultants in their final report have described the district council's role during the delivery stage:

The role of the district council is critical to the delivery process and it will be essential for the authority to demonstrate leadership through the commitment of staff and funding to deliver.

While many of the development projects have potential for private sector led delivery, it will be essential for the district council to provide effective support to remove development barriers and create a positive engagement culture with the development industry.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 The Salisbury Vision takes a holistic approach to how the city should develop over the next 15-20 years. This is important if our objectives for the city are to be achieved. Many of the Vision's projects and proposals are interdependent. All are inter-related in that together they form the Vision. This does not mean that the proposals within the consultants' final Vision document cannot be changed or improved. But it does mean that achieving the Vision objectives and gaining all of the socio-economic, cultural and environmental benefits that the Vision promises will only be possible by a commitment to the delivery of the Vision in its entirety. The Salisbury Vision, as presented in the consultants' final report is aspirational and highly ambitious. It is not, however, beyond our reach or ability.
- 7.2 The Salisbury Vision project was predicated on the widely held view that Salisbury was 'being left behind'. It is readily acknowledged that Salisbury is an important centre in the south west of England. It is a tourism destination of international significance, a business centre of regional importance, and a sub-regional centre for retail, culture, housing and further education. Additionally it is the centre of the Salisbury Diocese which covers most of Wiltshire and Dorset.
- 7.3 It is also acknowledged, however, that retail competition is increasing with new developments in Southampton, Bournemouth, Andover and Winchester. A lack of employment land close to the city threatens to restrict the growth and expansion of our local businesses, and low-cost airlines and newly developing domestic markets are challenging our tourism industry. House prices are higher than the regional and national average whilst salaries are lower. People find it hard to get on the housing ladder and employers have difficulty in recruiting across a wide range of jobs and skills. Out of this was borne the Salisbury Vision.
- 7.4 Salisbury District Council have a critical role to play in ensuring that the benefits of the Salisbury Vision are achieved for the people of south Wiltshire.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to confirm their support for the Salisbury Vision.
- 8.2 Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel is also asked to record their comments and suggestions to Cabinet on:
- a) The overall Salisbury Vision final report as presented by the consultants;
 - b) The aim of the Vision projects as outlined in appendix A
 - b) The detail of the Vision projects as detailed in the final report;
 - c) The proposed delivery process; and
 - d) The proposed consultation arrangements for the Vision.

9.0 Background information

- o Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework: Invitation to tender (2005) Salisbury District Council and the South West Regional Development Agency
- o Salisbury Vision Draft Baseline Report (2006) Gillespies
- o Salisbury Vision options Summary Report (2006) Gillespies
- o Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework Draft Final Report (2006) Gillespies
- o Summary Report of Community Involvement (2007) BDOR Limited
- o Vision for Salisbury Area Development Framework Final Report (2007) Gillespies

All reports are available on the council's website: www.salisbury.gov.uk/vision

10.0 Implications

Financial	All activities outlined in the report are financed from existing previously agreed budgets.
Legal	None
Communications	These have been discussed with the corporate communications team.
ICT	None
Human Rights	None
Personnel	None
Community Safety	Improving community safety will be built into the delivery stage of the Vision
Environmental	None
Equality and Diversity	This is one of the fundamental principles upon which the Vision is built. Additionally, as work progresses on the delivery of the Vision, the steering group and the sub-groups will be responsible for ensuring that each project is assessed with regard to its contribution to the council's equality and diversity policy. Ensuring equality and diversity is also identified as a responsibility in the project manager's job description.
Council's Core Values	A thriving local economy; Working together with other public, private and voluntary sector organisations to develop a better, more sustainable district.
Political Priorities	Consult and involve local people A cleaner, greener Salisbury
Wards affected	Improving the quality of life All