

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

10th January 2011

**CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PLAN - DOCUMENT TIMETABLE AND
SITE ALLOCATIONS AND POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jinny Pearce, Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development & Transport
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning & Regeneration
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The purpose of this report is twofold: firstly to seek Members' agreement to a flexible timetable for the production of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and secondly, to seek approval to temporarily abandon work on the Site Allocations and Policies (DPD) in order to focus resources on the Core Strategy DPD.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 1) **work towards the Publication version of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document continue, but with flexibility in the timetable for production;**

and to RECOMMEND that

- 2) **work on the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document be abandoned temporarily.**

3. BACKGROUND

Core Strategy DPD

- 3.1 The Core Strategy DPD will set out the Strategic Vision, Objectives and policies for Redditch until 2026. It will provide guidance on strategic issues such as the environment, sustainable development, strategic locations or allocations of land and climate change.
- 3.2 Production of the Core Strategy is ongoing and the current status of this document is the subject of a separate report to this committee.

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The existing timetable for the Core Strategy DPD as set out in the LDS is included at Appendix A.

- 3.3 The Government has signaled its intention to radically reform the planning system and introduce new national planning policy. This is likely to change the way that local planning policy is produced and the format and content of local plans. New national planning policy may include 'transitional arrangements' for documents that are already in production, such as the Core Strategy. Any new transitional arrangements may have an implication on the Core Strategy timetable. In light of the emerging changes to the national planning system it may be necessary to hold an additional period of consultation or to delay the date of Publication from that already set out in the LDS.
- 3.4 On 22nd July 2010 the Secretary of State announced the Government's intention in principle to abolish the remaining eight Government Offices for the Regions across England. Prior to this, Redditch Borough Council was required to submit proposed LDS's to the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) for approval. Since the Secretary of State's announcement, Officers have been advised by GOWM that they are no longer able to make decisions on LDS's and that the role of LDS under emerging new national planning policy is unknown until the Localism Bill is published (draft due in November 2010). Verbal advice from GOWM is that the current timescale for Core Strategy production should be advertised on the Council's website.

Site Allocations and Policies DPD

- 3.5 The purpose of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD is to allocate land for a range of uses to support the strategic spatial vision and objectives of the Council's Core Strategy. The DPD must be in conformity with the Core Strategy as it will demonstrate how the vision, objectives and spatial strategy will be implemented and delivered. It will include sites for development, for example housing and employment.
- 3.6 To date, preparation on the Site Allocations and Policies DPD has not progressed beyond the 'scoping' stage. The Scoping Report is the first stage in the Sustainability Appraisal process and sets the context and objectives, establishes the baseline and decides on the scope of the DPD. The current LDS timetables a period of public consultation on Issues and Alternative Options for the Site Allocations and Policies DPD for November 2010.

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However, in light of the revocation of the RSS and emerging changes to the planning system detailed above, Officers have considered it prudent to concentrate resources on the Core Strategy DPD as it is at a more advanced stage of production and is the principal DPD for the Borough.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current Local Development Scheme timetable for the Core Strategy is shown at Appendix A. In order to take account of emerging changes to the national planning system (referred to in para 3.3-3.4 above) it may be necessary to hold an additional period of consultation before the Publication stage of the Core Strategy or to delay the Publication stage.
- 4.2 Members are therefore asked to allow flexibility in the timetable for Core Strategy production to enable the possibility of an additional consultation period. Any necessary changes from the timetable in LDS No.4 will be noted on the Council's website and Members will be kept informed through Planning Advisory Panel meetings.
- 4.3 It is proposed that work on the Site Allocations and Policies DPD is abandoned temporarily in order to focus resources on the Core Strategy DPD. The Core Strategy DPD is at a more advanced stage of production and is the principal DPD for the Borough. Changes to the national planning system may change the way local plans are produced and may change to the extent that DPDs of the nature required under the present legislation will no longer be the format of local planning policy. As the Site Allocations and Policies DPD has not progressed beyond the 'scoping' stage it is considered prudent to focus resources on the Core Strategy DPD and await further guidance from Government on the national planning system before progressing any other DPDs.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of holding an additional consultation period can be met within existing Development Plans budgets. The cost of any additional evidence required to support the Core Strategy may be requested through separate budget bids.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Borough Council is required to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The Core Strategy forms an integral part of the LDF.

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7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Redditch Borough's LDF forms part of the development plan for the area. The Core Strategy is the main Development Plan Document within the LDF.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

The policies in the emerging Core Strategy will contribute to achieving the following Council Objectives:

- EC3: Improving Economic Development
- EC4: To develop the Town Centre and Church Hill District Centre
- EC5: To provide new leisure facilities across the town enhancing residents' opportunities to access quality sporting facilities
- EC7: To improve health and well being across the Borough through leisure and arts
- S1: To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- S4: Deliver agreed improvements to the Town Centre in terms of environmental quality and the night-time economy
- CG1: Deliver a cleaner, greener Borough and improve the quality of green spaces
- CG5: Improve energy efficiency

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Progress on the Core Strategy is necessary to ensure the Core Strategy can be adopted in the anticipated timescale. If the Core Strategy is not progressed and adopted there is a risk the council will not have an up to date development plan with which to determine planning applications.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Core Strategy. These assessments have highlighted no noticeable impacts on equalities groups; however, more information is needed to determine the effects. This will be achieved by further data gathering from monitoring forms sent out with consultation material. A further Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed at the next stage of the Core Strategy.

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12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

None identified.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

National planning policy has a requirement to address adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change. National Planning Policy also has a requirement to ensure that implications from development on biodiversity are minimised and mitigated against. The Core Strategy will seek to implement this at a local level.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

The Redditch Borough Core Strategy will seek to ensure that community safety is maximised by having a policy which ensures new development in Redditch is designed to high standards. The Core Strategy aims to aid changing perceptions of crime and antisocial behaviour through practical measures identified in policy. The District Centres in the New Town areas of Redditch have been identified as 'Strategic Sites' for redevelopment in order to improve crime and anti-social behaviour issues that are due, in part to the design of the District Centres.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

A Health Impact Assessment will be completed for the Core Strategy. The purpose of which is to ensure that the policies in the Core Strategy, where possible, actively promote health gain for the local population, reduce health inequalities and do not actively damage health.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

None. This is a new issue.

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19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Consultation on the Core Strategy will be carried out in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes - PAP
Chief Executive	Yes - CMT
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes - CMT
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Yes - CMT
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes - CMT
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes - CMT
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes - CMT
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes - CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	No

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Core Strategy Project Plan

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Borough of Redditch Local Development Scheme No. 4
<http://redditch.whub.org.uk/cms/pdf/LDS%20No4.pdf>

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