



Cabinet 25 July 2012

Recommendations from Sustainable Development Working Party: 3 July 2012 (Aug12/04)

Cabinet Members:

*Cllr Terry Clements
Cllr Peter Stevens*

Chairman of the Working Party:

Cllr Richard Rout

**1. St Edmundsbury Vision 2031: March to April 2012 Consultation Feedback
(Report D56)**

RECOMMENDED:-

That subject to the inclusion of Workshop Sessions for Members to have input into revising the draft documents, the revised programme, as set out in paragraph 5.2 and Appendix 2 of Report D56, for taking the Vision 2031 documents through to the Examination and Adoption stages, be agreed.

Report D56 was submitted which informed Members of the outcome of the consultation on the draft Vision 2031 documents for Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and the Rural Area and sought approval of a proposed revised programme for taking the documents through to the Examination and Adoption stages.

On 31 January 2012, consideration had been given to the content of Draft Vision 2031 documents for the Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Rural Areas (Paper C298 refers). The Working Party had recommended to Cabinet that the documents be published for consultation. This recommendation had been accepted by the Cabinet on 1 February 2012 and public consultation had taken place between 1 March 2012 and 30 April 2012.

Report D56 contained a summary of the consultation events and processes carried out and these were detailed in Appendix 1, along with the number of responses received. Officers gave a presentation summarising the content of the representations made in relation to each of the three areas. A complete list of the comments received, quoting them verbatim, is contained on the Council's website and is also available for inspection at West Suffolk House and Haverhill House. A separate report on the views of stakeholder focus groups has been produced and is available if Members wish to read it.

Officers are now examining the details of comments submitted and proposing charges where appropriate. The documents will also be updated to take account of the recently published National Planning Policy Framework. Work on supporting evidence for the documents, including Infrastructure Delivery Plans, is continuing.

The Council is required by regulations to publish a programme for the preparing of statutory planning policy documents known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS). Appendix 2 of the report contained the revised LDS in respect of all the Local Development Framework Documents currently being prepared.

The key revised milestones leading up to the adoption of the Vision 2031 documents were set out in the report as:-

- (a) Third week October 2012: Revised Draft Vision 2031 to be submitted to Special Area Working Parties/Cabinet/Full Council;
- (b) a 6 week consultation from the first week of November until the second week of December 2012;
- (c) agreement sought from full Council to submit the documents to Planning Inspectorate for Examination – February 2013;
- (d) submission to Planning Inspectorate in April 2013;
- (e) Examination in Public during August 2013; and
- (f) Adoption in January 2014.

In discussing the proposed programme a Member questioned the need to hold a special Council meeting during October 2012 to consider documents which at that stage were still in draft form and not finalised from the point of view of submitting them to the Planning Inspectorate. Officers responded by advising that the Council's Constitution required the approval of full Council for final draft Local Plan documents to be subject to public consultation. Members also expressed concern about the situation that the proposed programme did not include an opportunity for Councillors to have an input into revising the Draft Vision documents or the proposed Infrastructure Delivery Plans prior to their presentation to the Area Working Parties/Cabinet/Council during October 2012. Officers agreed to investigate how this could be facilitated, possibly by way of workshop sessions during August. The Working Party was also advised that a Communications Strategy was being formulated, the aim of which was to keep Town/Parish Councils and other interested organisations informed of when the next consultation will take place.

2. Draft Uttlesford Local Plan Consultation

RECOMMENDED:-

That Uttlesford District Council be thanked for consulting the Borough Council and that it does not wish to raise any objections to the content of its draft Local Plan at this stage.

A narrative was considered which advised that Uttlesford District Council had consulted the Borough Council on its Local Plan and included a suggested response.

Uttlesford District Council has commenced the preparation of a new district wide local plan. The Borough Council, although not an adjoining authority, has been consulted on the draft document. The Duty to Cooperate provisions of the Localism Act requires planning authorities to seek to work with others to ensure local plans consider any wider implications of their proposals. Consultation commenced on 8 June 2012 and runs for a six week period to 23 July 2012.

Since 2006 the Borough Council had been consulted on the preparation of the Uttlesford Core Strategy, which was never actually taken through to Public Examination and Adoption. The current planning policies for the area were therefore those contained in the Local Plan adopted in 2005.

The proposed spatial strategy for the district was the same as previously consulted on in the draft Core Strategy. It proposed a similar approach to that adopted in St Edmundsbury, in that the major focus for new development would be at the largest settlements of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow, with more limited growth in villages commensurate with the services and facilities they contain. This approach was consistent with earlier drafts of their Core Strategy, to which the Borough Council previously had no objection.

Given the proposed strategy and the nature of the district, there remained little risk of any impact on St Edmundsbury and, in particular, the delivery of the Borough Council's planning policies in the Haverhill area.