

ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 22

Brighton & Hove City Council

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| Subject: | Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Background Studies | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 30 July 2009 | | |
| Report of: | Director of Environment | | |
| Contact Officer: | Name: | Rebecca Fry | Tel: 29-3773 |
| | E-mail: | rebecca.fry@brighton-hove.gov.uk | |
| Key Decision: | No | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of five background studies as supporting evidence for the Core Strategy, part of the Local Development Framework and other Development Plan Documents and council strategies. The interim versions of three of these background studies were approved in June 2008.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Environment approves the final reports of these five background studies as supporting evidence for the Core Strategy and other appropriate Development Plan Documents and council strategies.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Core Strategy is part of the Local Development Framework (LDF), which has been introduced by the Government to replace the Local Plan. In addition to conforming to national and regional planning policy, the Core Strategy is required to be supported by a sound evidence base. A number of background studies have been prepared which form part of this evidence base. It is important to note that whilst the background studies are important evidence contributing to policy development they cannot in themselves define what the policies should be.
- 3.2 Several other background studies have been completed and previously approved at the same time as the interim versions of these background studies in June 2008. The interim studies were approved on the basis that the final versions were to be subject to approval.
- 3.3 The five studies currently under consideration are technical documents produced in order to comply with planning guidance and to help ensure therefore that the Core Strategy is considered to be sound. The Background Studies under consideration here are:

- Transport Assessment (updated)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study
- A Green Network for Brighton & Hove
- Employment Land Study (updated)

3.4 See appendix 1 for summary of key findings.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation with relevant council departments and key stakeholders has been undertaken, where appropriate, during the preparation of these documents. Further consultation will take place on the Core Strategy which is informed by these documents.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Preparation and consultation costs for the various background studies have been identified and a budget allocation has been set aside for this within the Environment Directorate. There are no capital implications.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice

Date: 02/06/09

Legal Implications:

5.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new development plan system. The new system is generally known as the Local Development Framework and this Framework will include documents which have the status of Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The Core Strategy is a DPD and will, in due course, be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination and as part of that process the Secretary of State will consider whether the Core Strategy is “sound”. As pointed out in paragraph 3.1 of this Report the Core Strategy must be supported by a sound evidence base and this will require studies, such as the Studies that are the subject of this Report, to inform the Core Strategy’s policies and to ensure the Core Strategy will meet the tests to be applied by the Secretary of State at the examination stage.

Lawyer Consulted:

Hilary Woodward

Date: 03/06/09

Equalities Implications:

5.3 This is a technical study not a policy document therefore an EQIA is not considered to be necessary given that an Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out on the Core Strategy which will propose policies based on these studies. The Council has already adopted a Statement of Community Involvement, which encourages effective social inclusion for all groups to influence the policy making agenda. In addition to this during the preparation of these studies a wide range of organisations and individuals have been consulted.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability considerations are central to the new planning system. The Core Strategy to be informed by these background studies requires a sustainability appraisal. Which, in itself, also contributes to the development of policies within the Core Strategy.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None identified.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 None identified.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The background studies will assist delivery of a number of council and city-wide strategies, in particular the Core Strategy and emerging open space strategies, along with the Sustainable Community Strategy. They will also form a material consideration in current and future planning proposals.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 None required as the studies are concerned with the identification of matters of fact. The Studies are required by Government planning guidance requiring plans to be supported by a sound evidence base. Indeed if the final background studies are not approved the interim versions will remain in the public domain. The latest information may not therefore be taken into consideration in planning matters. Without formal approval of the background studies the evidence base to the Core Strategy may be considered unsound.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To gain formal approval of the five completed background studies that form part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents and council strategies. It also allows the final documents to go into the public domain to inform planning decisions.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of Background Studies

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. A Green Network for Brighton & Hove
2. Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation Study
3. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
4. Transport Assessment (updated)
5. Employment Land Study (updated)

Background Documents

As above for Documents in Members' Rooms