

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 16 JUNE 2011
title: FORTHCOMING CONSULTATION- PROGRAMME OUTLINE
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Members of the forthcoming consultation on various LDF documents.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – Production of the Local Development Framework is a statutory requirement and will help in the delivery of housing, employment and the protection and enhancement of the environment, ultimately presenting the delivery strategy for implementing the vision for the Ribble Valley for the next 15 years.
- Community Objectives – As a tool for delivering spatial policy, the LDF identifies how a range of issues relating to the objectives of a sustainable economy, thriving market towns and housing provision will be addressed through the planning system.
- Corporate Priorities – Work on the LDF, in particular the Core Strategy, which is the central document of the LDF and sets the overall vision and approach to future planning policy, will aid performance and consistency.
- Other Considerations – The Council has a duty to prepare spatial policy under the Local Development Framework system and make consultation responses available for public viewing.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 As Members are aware, the current approach to development plans introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to develop a new suite of documents known as the Local Development Framework (LDF) that will replace the adopted Districtwide Local Plan. The policies within the LDF must be informed by a strong, robust evidence base and work is continuing on producing both these evidence base documents to ensure an up to date and thorough baseline, as well as the actual LDF documents, chiefly the Core Strategy.

2.2 Recent work has been concentrated on preparing for a six-week consultation exercise on the following documents that will begin at the end of June, throughout July and into early August, subject to agreement by Committee.

Core Strategy Alternative Development Strategy Options
Core Strategy Key Statements and Development Management Policies- Proposed Revisions
Employment Land Position Statement

The following two documents have been previously agreed for consultation and will be published for consultation as part of the same programme.

G6 (Essential Open Space) Audit

Meeting Housing Needs in Ribble Valley

2.3 A brief summary of these consultation documents is set out below.

3. DOCUMENTS BEING CONSULTED UPON

3.1 Core Strategy Alternative Development Strategy Options

3.2 During the Regulation 25 stage consultation on the Core Strategy between August and October 2010, 4000 representations were submitted into the consultation process. In response to these representations, work has been undertaken on generating five additional, alternative Development Strategy options.

3.3 For each of the 5 additional Development Strategy options (options A, B, C, D and E) as well as the previously presented options (options 1, 2 and 3) a breakdown is included in the consultation report, which sets out the percentage of development in each area and how this translates into dwelling numbers.

3.4 Information on how to comment on the options and the relevant dates for doing so are included in the report, along with a comment submission form.

3.5 Core Strategy Key Statements and Development Management Policies- Proposed Revisions

3.6 As with the above consultation document, following the regulation 25 Core Strategy consultation work has been undertaken on analysing the responses and this consultation paper deals with how these responses have influenced two specific parts of the Core Strategy. These parts are the Key Statements and their associated explanatory text and the Development Management (DM) policies (the latter within Appendix 4 of the Regulation 25 Core Strategy document).

3.7 The report includes an appendix that sets out just the amended versions of the Key Statements drawn from a more detailed schedule and those DM policies that have been amended, with amendments underlined. Some of the DM policies have either not been amended or received no consultation responses and therefore remain un-amended and are only referred to by their title.

3.8 The more 'detailed schedule' is available in hard copy at planning reception and in the Members room, as well as on the Forward Planning pages of the Council's website, and sets out the comments made by respondents during the consultation the Key Statements and DM policies and includes a section called 'discussion and suggested changes to policy' for each. This section explains the decision making process in terms of where and why changes are now suggested to the Key Statements and DM polices.

3.9 Employment Land Position Statement

3.10 This paper provides an up to date position in terms of the current employment land situation in the borough. It updates the work undertaken by the BE Group in 2008 on the Ribble Valley Employment Land and Retail Study and acts as a guide to allocating future employment land needs and for considering the use of current employment sites, given their potential other uses in the light of the still relatively high demand for housing land in the Borough.

3.11 It is intended that this Employment Land Position Statement will be used as an evidence base for future land needs for employment uses and as a means to inform the Core Strategy.

3.12 G6 (Essential Open Space) Audit

3.13 As part of this round of consultation we are also inviting comments on a review of Policy G6 – Essential Open Space. Policy G6 is a policy in the existing local plan dating from 1998 that seeks to protect areas identified as ‘essential open space’. These can be areas of undeveloped land, car parks, play areas and such like. Generally, these sites were designated in the plan to protect recreation areas or areas that had some visual quality at the time the plan was made and it was important to control development on these sites. In preparing the new Local Development Framework, it was considered important to undertake a review of this designation as a number of sites were being put forward for development and the Council has to ensure it has a sound basis on which to continue their protection where appropriate. It is also important to enable suitable sites to come forward to help meet requirements for development if circumstances have changed since that plan was made.

3.14 The review does not in itself remove the formal designation as shown on the Districtwide Local Plan. However the outcome of the review could be taken into account when deciding planning applications and could mean land being granted planning permission that previously may not have been. The consultation paper, together with plans showing sites where the designation was no longer seen as appropriate as a result of the review are available on the Council’s website.

3.15 Addressing Housing Need in Ribble Valley

3.16 This document is a revision of the previously published Affordable Housing Memorandum of Understanding. Following recently proposed changes to social housing, which will have significant implications on delivery, particularly tenure type for future schemes, the memorandum has been amended to reflect these.

3.17 It also seeks to address not only the issue of affordability in the borough but in addressing the identified housing need, the needs of the elderly. Ribble Valley has an ageing population that is projected to increase by 49% in the next 15 years. The market has failed to meet the housing needs of this age group and therefore it is proposed that accommodation appropriate for the elderly will be secured through a policy requirement.

This change is now reflected within the memorandum consultations document that will now be titled 'Addressing Housing Need in Ribble Valley'.

- 3.18 Other significant changes to the document are that all sites of over 30 units would have to provide 15% of the site for over 60 year olds. 50% of this is to be affordable and to be included within the 30% affordable housing offer. The remaining 50% would be at market sale or rent.
- 3.19 The document will be used to inform housing and planning policy and used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It has been prepared as a Health and Housing Committee policy and that Committee will consider the response and if appropriate, formally adopt the document as Council Policy.

4. CONSULTATION PROCEDURE AND FURTHER STAGES

- 4.1 All comments on all the consultation documents will be acknowledged following the end of the consultation period and will be held within our Local Development Framework (LDF) database. It is important to note that responses will be available for public viewing and will be held on our LDF database in accord with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
- 4.2 Following the consultation period, all comments will be considered. Where necessary amendments will be made and work will continue on the Publication stage version of the Core Strategy. Further detail of the future programme is set out in appendix 1.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Colin Hirst, extension 4503, Diane Cafferty, extension 4551 or Phil Dagnall, extension 4570.

CORE STRATEGY WORK PROGRAMME

KEY STAGE	DATES	STATUS
Regulation 25 consultation period.	August-October 2010	Achieved
Publication of Summary of Reg 25 Representations.	March 2011	Achieved
Present to Members Core Strategy Alternative Options, Revisions to Key Statements & DM Policies, Employment Land Position Statement.	June 2011	Achieved
Six-week consultation period on Core Strategy Alternative Options, Revisions to Key Statements & DM Policies, Employment Land Position Statement, G6 designation review & Meeting Housing Needs in Ribble Valley document.	June – August 2011	Anticipated date
Consideration of responses on Core Strategy Alternative Options, Revisions to Key Statements & DM Policies, Employment Land Position Statement, G6 designation review & Meeting Housing Needs in Ribble Valley document and writing of Infrastructure Plan and Regulation 27 stage Core Strategy	August– September 2011	Anticipated date
Present Regulation 27 stage Core Strategy to Members	September 2011	Anticipated date
Consultation on Regulation 27 stage Core Strategy and associated SA/SEA	October– December 2011	Anticipated date
Consideration of Reg 27 consultation Repts received and writing of submission Core Strategy document (Regulation 30)	January– March 2012	Anticipated date
Submission of Core Strategy (regulation 30) to Secretary of State.	March 2012	Anticipated date
Examination in Public (assessment of Core Strategy by a Planning Inspector)	June 2012.	Anticipated date
Receipt of Inspectors report and decision on Soundness	October 2012	Anticipated date
Formal adoption of Core Strategy	November 2012.	Anticipated date

