

**Meeting:** Strategic Planning Advisory Panel  
**Date:** Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004  
**Subject:** Developing the Local Development Framework in Harrow - Draft Local Development Scheme  
**Responsible Officer:** Director of Strategy (Urban Living)  
**Contact Officer:** Dennis Varcoe  
**Portfolio Holder:** Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing  
**Key Decision:** (yes or no) No  
**Status:** (Public or Confidential (including exemption paragraph) Public

### **Section 1: Summary**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that local authorities submit a Local Development Scheme (LDS) to the Secretary of State by 28 March 2005 (6 months after enactment). The LDS is a 3-year project management plan which sets out the development plans and other supplementary planning advice that the Council intends to produce as part of the new Local Development Framework which will, when adopted, replace the Harrow Unitary Development Plan. This report sets out the importance of the evidence base for the LDF, the reasoning behind the priorities suggested for inclusion in the draft programme, and the importance of community involvement and sustainability appraisals in the process. Following final confirmation of the documents to be included in the LDS, completion of the detailed project management plan and editing of the document, it is suggested that community involvement on the draft LDS is undertaken.

### **Decision Required**

The Panel is requested to: -

1. Endorse the priorities and programme identified in the draft LDS:
2. Agree that the Draft Local Development Scheme be made available for public comment, following finalising of certain matters identified in the report, and
3. On receipt of comments on the draft, agree that any suggested amendments to the Draft LDS be submitted to Cabinet at its meeting on 17 March 2005, in order that the timetable for submission to Government Office for London is met.

## **Reason for report**

The Local Development Scheme is required to be approved by Cabinet prior to submission to the Government Office for London by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005. Submission of the LDS by the set deadline, the priorities included and the delivery of the programme set out in the LDS are important elements of Planning Delivery Grant. Public involvement on the draft is seen as a positive start to the LDF process.

## **Benefits**

The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Local Development Framework, the initial stages involving preparation of a Local Development Scheme(LDS). Submission of the LDS to the Government Office of London by the end of March 2005 will secure Planning Delivery Grant on this element. Undertaking community involvement on the draft LDS indicates the Council's early commitment to securing engagement throughout the whole process.

## **Cost of Proposals**

The cost of preparing the LDS be contained within current approved Departmental Budget and Planning Delivery Grant.

## **Risks**

Completion of the detailed project management plan may indicate that the identified programme may not all be capable of delivery.

## **Implications if recommendations rejected**

If the LDS is not submitted by the end of March 2005, the Council would be likely to lose this element of the Planning Delivery Grant. This would also be likely to impact on the Council's ability to resource the LDF programme.

## **Section 2: Report**

### Brief History

Previous reports to the Panel have briefly set out the likely requirements under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, which was partly enacted on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004. In the comparatively limited time available since the adoption of the HUDP, officers have been developing the draft LDS to its current content.

### Options considered

The content of the LDS has been prescribed in legislation and guidance. Draft assessment criteria to be used by GOL have been used to determine the

approach adopted in this draft LDS. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to consult on the draft LDS, it is considered that this fully reflects the spirit of the new community engagement requirements

#### Content of the draft LDS (Appendix A)

It is important to briefly comment on some of the key matters in the new system which have strongly influenced the suggested content of, and programme for, the LDS. These are (1) the evidence base for the LDF (2) the reasoning behind the priorities included in the draft programme (3) the importance attached to community involvement, and (4) Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisals.

(1) Evidence Base - Production and management of a sound and comprehensive evidence base to help identify the key issues and priorities to be addressed and to provide support for the policies and proposals eventually put forward is a key feature of the LDF process. The 'soundness' of all LDF documents rest on good quality information. Accordingly, authorities are required to identify necessary research work needed to ensure that the evidence base is comprehensive, sound and up to date.

#### (2) Reasoning behind the priorities

In determining priorities, it is important that continuity is achieved in the new system. Public consultation on supplementary planning guidance in relation to the Harrow Town Centre Masterplan, the Harrow on the Hill Station proposal site, and the planning brief for the Honey Pot Lane Proposal Site has recently been undertaken, and the Council can move speedily towards adoption of these. In addition, having only adopted the HUDP in July 2004, it is important that certain supplementary planning documents (SPDs) are produced to support policies in the Plan. These have been kept to a minimum and reflect that significant work has already been completed.

Reference was included in the HUDP to a commitment to give early consideration to the areas of waste and housing provision - two key government and Mayoral priorities. Discussions are already in hand with other Boroughs in West London with a view to possibly producing a joint Waste DPD (and reflecting the approach being taken by North Boroughs). Although these discussions are at an early stage, it is recommended that the Waste DPD be accorded high and early priority within the LDS.

Reflecting the government's priority for the speedy production of the Development Plan Documents of the Local Development Framework (i.e. the Core Strategy, Site Specific Proposals, Generic Development Policies and the Proposals Map. it is therefore recommended that these then become the main focus within the LDS. Within available resources, it is considered that it would be over-ambitious to include any more documents at this stage. It is open to the Council to amend the LDS by adding further documents at some later stage, should resources allow, and progress on producing other documents in the LDS not be compromised as a result.

### (3) Community Involvement

With the emphasis on securing effective community involvement in all aspects of the LDF process, authorities are required to give early consideration to producing a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This must set out the standards to be achieved and the methods of engagement that the Council intends to employ. If a consistent approach is to be achieved it is essential that this document is one of the first to be produced.

Reflecting the need to achieve consistent standards across all Council and Planning services, the statement importantly must also include the approach and standards for dealing with planning applications.

### (4) Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

The European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive now requires that policies, plans and programmes include sustainability appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments. Each document produced will be subject to sustainability appraisals which, although time-consuming, importantly enable all documents to be scrutinised to identify what impact they would have.

### Consultation

No formal consultations undertaken.

### Financial Implications

The costs of the LDS preparation can be contained within the current approved revenue budget. The costs of the LDF are the subject of growth bids via the High Level Service Plans that will be considered as part of the budget considerations for the medium term budget strategy.

Legal Implications (Comments included in the report).

### Equalities Impact

Commitment to the production of the Statement of Community Involvement in the LDS will indicate the Council's intentions that the involvement of all sections of the community in the LDF process will be sought.

## **Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents**

Appendix A – the latest draft of the Local Development Scheme.

### Supporting information

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Community Involvement in Planning: the Government's objectives

PPS1, PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies and PPS 12: LDFs

Creating Local Developing Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12

Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and LDFs

Draft Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 –  
A Consultation Document.