

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Cabinet
Date of Committee 13th July 2006
Report Title **Coventry City Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy - Issues and Options**

Summary This document is the first stage in the production of the Core Strategy for the City’s Local Development Framework. The Issues and Options set out alternative scenarios as to how the city could grow over the next 20 years. There is a six week consultation process where Stakeholders may comment on the issues and options.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? Yes/No

Background Papers Coventry City Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper.

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

Other Committees

Local Member(s)
 (With brief comments, if appropriate)

Other Elected Members Councillor P Barnes)
 Councillor M Jones) for information
 Councillor Morris-Jones)

Cabinet Member Councillor C Saint – Accelerated growth would be compatible with the sub-regional response to the RSS revisions, but the objectives of the plan should be sustainable.
 (Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

- Chief Executive
- Legal I Marriott – agreed.
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION **YES/NO** *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Cabinet - 13th July 2006

**Coventry City Council Local Development Framework
Core Strategy - Issues and Options**

**Report of the Strategic Director for
Environment and Economy**

Recommendation

That Cabinet endorses the conclusions of paragraph 4.1 of the Director's report and that Coventry City Council be advised accordingly.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Coventry City Council to produce a Local Development Framework for the city to replace the existing adopted Unitary Development Plan, which lasts till 2011. The first stage in the process is to produce a Core Strategy. The Issues and Options Paper of the Core Strategy sets out the context with key facts and an overview. This is followed by a draft vision, draft aims and objectives and key issues are identified. Two growth options have then been put forward.
- 1.2 There is a six week consultation period ending on the 30th June, on the issues and options which will generate responses and these will influence the direction of the city's growth strategy till 2026. The next stage of the process is the production of the Preferred Options in September 2006.
- 1.3 Coventry City Council has also prepared a Draft Scoping Report, which is the first stage in the preparation of a sustainability approval (SA). This document is also starting a five week period of consultation, whereby comments are sought from statutory as well as local and regional consultees. The Scoping report queries whether the SA objectives, indicators and targets are suitable and/or accurate.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Plan

- 2.1 In 2005 the City Council set out its Vision for Coventry – “A growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and where businesses come to invest.” (NB In response to the Regional Housing Strategy 12 months ago Coventry City Council has previously stated its aspiration for Coventry to grow to a figure of 400,000 but within the its existing boundaries).
- 2.2 The new Local Development Framework will help to achieve this vision. The City Council organised a visioning event in January 2006 whereby stakeholders

could contribute to the production of the vision for the city. Based upon this the City Council produced a series of aims and objectives which form the basis of this consultation document. A copy of the document is available for inspection in the Environment and Economy Directorate.

The aims comprise the following:-

(a) **The Image of the City to the Outside World**

- 2.3 It was evident that Coventry should sell itself more positively and try to reduce negative perceptions. It should exploit its both its heritage and many successful recent developments.

(b) **Environmental Image of the City**

- 2.4 There is an appreciation that Coventry's quality of development over the years, has been mixed; there is a realisation that there is a need to improve the built environment for residents and visitors alike.

(c) **Developing the City**

- 2.5 Coventry has not achieved its potential as a major city and the Core Strategy aims to help achieve its status as the 11th largest city in the UK. Major issues include maintaining and developing the city's employment base; balancing growth needs with the preservation of the Green Belt; continuing investment in economic diversity; and exploiting positive benefits of both universities and retaining graduates to live and work in the city.

(d) **Providing for people's needs**

- 2.6 There is a need in some areas to improve social facilities particularly in neighbourhoods where there is a poor quality built and green environment.

A City that Functions Well

- 2.7 The plan should help to improve public transport links from the international down to the local level.

Becoming More Sustainable

- 2.8 Coventry aims to become a more sustainable city especially by being more energy efficient, more environmentally friendly, and it will promote recycling.

3. Growth Options

- 3.1 On 25th May 2006 a report setting out the Coventry, Solihull Warwickshire Forum's sub-regional response to the RSS Brief was supported by Cabinet.

- 3.2 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) provides the framework for all LDFs in the region including Coventry's LDF. The RSS focuses development on the major urban areas (MUAs) including Coventry. The City is also seen as being at the heart of the sub-region and together with Solihull and Warwickshire is seen as an important growth engine for the whole region.

- 3.3 The RSS is currently being revised and section 4(4) authorities (which include the Counties and Metropolitan Boroughs) have been invited to respond accordingly in respect of various growth scenarios put forward by the Regional Planning Body (RPB). Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire have provided a sub-regional response and the RPB will produce an Options paper based on these responses in for consultation in January 2007. Coventry City Council has concluded that the city can meet its current RSS allocations for housing and employment but if higher growth scenarios are anticipated then it can not meet any new requirements within the built up areas of the city and may have to expand in to its own Greenfield land within existing city boundaries.
- 3.4 Coventry's Core Strategy proposes two options for growth. These are:-
- (i) Accelerated growth.
 - (ii) A lack of growth.
- 3.5 Accelerated growth would mean greater investment in jobs, facilities and housing, investment to improve the image of the urban environment to stem outward migration, an increase demand on services schools and facilities, need for a greater diversity of housing and the possibility of a more densely developed city.
- 3.6 A lack of growth could mean the city not achieving its aims and aspirations in terms of the issues set out above especially through reduced investment, loss of population from inner areas and potential pressure on the environment and social facilities of Warwickshire towns and villages.
- 3.7 The two Options form the basis of a six week consultation. There are a number of questions which need to be addressed in the light of whichever Option is chosen.
- 3.8 The sub-regional response to the RPB's brief concluded that if future growth levels are well above the current RSS levels, (as expected and possibly up to 51% higher) Coventry and Solihull's housing growth will need to increase to an annual rate nearly three times higher than the existing planned rate.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Option 1 proposed in the Draft Local Development Framework Core Strategy is consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy as it stands.
- 4.2 It is also consistent with the CSW Sub Regional technical input to the RSS Review Phase 2 endorsed by Cabinet on the 15th May 2006.

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22nd June 2006