



## Planning Policy Committee - 20 September 2010

### Funding for Specialists: Four Towns Plan and Development of Masterplans

#### Summary

This report seeks Members' agreement to funding for Specialists to undertake work in support of the preparation of the Four Towns Plan. It also seeks Member's agreement to support match funding for proposed Masterplans for Irthlingborough and Oundle.

#### Attachment(s)

None

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 At the Planning Policy Committee on 14 June 2010, Members agreed that before specialists were appointed to undertake work for the Four Towns Plan, costing estimates would be submitted to Members for approval.

1.2 In addition, this report also seeks Members' support for match funding to be sought for proposed Masterplans for Irthlingborough and Oundle.

#### 2.0 Discussion

##### (a) Four Towns Plan

2.1 There are several areas of work that have been identified, which will require specialist technical expertise and modelling capability, which is outside the in-house capacity. This report presents those areas where this work is required at an early stage. This is due to the overarching strategic nature of these issues, which have the potential to influence other aspects of the plan's preparation. It should be noted that other specialist expertise may be required at later stages of evidence gathering, once initial studies have been carried out in-house and if so, agreement will be sought from Members prior to engagement (see para.2.3 below).

2.2 Members agreement is sought on funding two areas of evidence gathering work:

1. Strategic flood risk assessment, including surface water management plan and water cycle strategy.

It is estimated that this work will cost from £8,000 to £10,000 and will cover Stage 1 work. *Note: Stage 2 work will only be required should Stage 1 results indicate this is required (costings have not been sought for Stage 2).*

2. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment.

It is estimated that Stage 1 HRA screening work will cost from £6,000 to £8,000. *Note: this would increase to around £15,000 to £20,000 if a full HRA is necessary (this will only be known once specialists have carried out the Stage 1 work).*

Members should note that these funds will come from the existing budget.

2.3 The potential additional specialist areas of work, which were identified in the 14 June 2010 Planning Policy Committee report, include those highlighted above, plus a housing needs survey (if affordable housing policies are to be refined); and mitigation testing for the transport strategy for options for development, with potential funding through the County Council. It should also be noted that the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) are planning to undertake a retail assessment of locality issues using specialist consultants. This should cover an area of evidence gathering originally anticipated to be required to be funded through the Four Towns Plan. This will now be funded by the JPU and hence should not require any new funding from East Northamptonshire Council.

**(b) Proposed Masterplans for Irthlingborough and Oundle**

2.4 Members are also advised that the Council is currently awaiting the result of a bid to the North Northamptonshire Development Company for a total of £50,000, to employ specialists to prepare Masterplans for both Oundle and Irthlingborough. Members will be notified of the result of this bid at this Committee meeting and, if successful, the bid will require match funding. Members are requested to consider this and that a recommendation be made to the Policy and Resources Committee to approve the match funding. It should be noted that no provision exists within the approved budget for this purpose.

**3.0 Recommendation**

3.1 That Members agree to the proposed funding for technical specialists and that the match funding of £50,000 be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

<b>Implications:</b>	
<b>Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy</b>	
Good Quality of Life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High Quality Service Delivery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Partnership Working	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong Community Leadership <input type="checkbox"/>
Effective Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of our Customers and Communities <input type="checkbox"/>
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Financial</b>	There are no financial implications at this stage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 2.4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget for 2.2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date <input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Risk Management</b>	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - 224 inherent risk score - residual risk score - <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Staff</b>	There are no additional staffing implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equalities and Human Rights</b>	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Legal</b>	Power: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)

Other considerations:					
<b>Background Papers:</b> Planning Policy Committee 14 June 2010					
<b>Person Originating Report:</b> Karen Britton, Planning Policy and Conservation Manager 01832 742142 kbritton@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
<b>Date: 23 August 2010</b>					
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 21)