



East Northamptonshire Council

Planning Policy Committee - 27 July 2009

Four Towns Area Plan and Local Development Scheme

Summary

This report seeks approval for the preparation of a Four Towns Area Plan, as part of the East Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 - Four Towns Area Plan: Key Points

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out an outline of what planning policy documents will be produced to make up the Local Development Framework. Planning Authorities are required to update their Local Development Scheme (LDS) on a regular basis and to maintain a 3 year rolling programme. The LDS needs to be agreed with the Government Office and it is also a requirement for the document to set out the staffing resources that will be required to deliver the programme.
- 1.2 At Planning Policy Committee on 14 April 2009, Members considered proposals for the preparation of planning policy documents, in order to update the Local Development Scheme (LDS) (Minute 448 refers). Councillors were generally supportive of the proposal to proceed with the preparation of 1 plan, rather than 2 plans for the south of the District. However, it was agreed to defer the decision until the result of the Inspector's Report on the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan Examination was known. Members also requested further information to be supplied about the intended timetable and cost.
- 1.3 The Inspector has since reported that the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan is 'Sound' and a separate report on the agenda seeks Members agreement to the adoption of that plan.

2.0 The Way Forward

- 2.1 The proposal is to rationalise the number of Development Plan Documents (DPD), in order to provide a more effective Local Development Framework. This will also reduce the potential for consultation fatigue and reduce costs through having one Examination rather than two.
- 2.2 It is proposed to take forward the earlier Raunds Area (Preferred Options) and Three Towns (Preferred Options) documents and combine these to form a new Development Plan Document for the south of the District: The Four Towns Area Plan. An outline of key points and indicative timetable relating to the preparation of this DPD is set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Whilst a considerable amount of work to produce the plan will be done in house there will also be a requirement for support from external consultants to provide the necessary specialist evidence base documents and expertise to ensure that a 'sound' plan is produced. There will also be the need for legal support as per the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan and the costs of the examination hearing.
- 2.4 The cost will be in the order of £450,000. This cost will be spread over 2 financial

years, however current budgetary provision within the medium term financial plan is only in the order of £220,000. Should members be agreeable to the approach set out there will be a requirement for a further report to the Policy and Resources Committee in September seeking agreement to the necessary additional funding, which would include a specific costing breakdown.

3.0 Supplementary Planning Documents

3.1 Members will recall that a number of proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) were presented at the last Committee. Since then further consideration has been given to the SPDS and based on the Inspector's advice in relation to the RNOTP Examination, Officers propose that priority be given to preparing the following SPD.

Open Space Strategy SPD

This will be a new SPD, which will review and develop the initial work already carried out by Consultants PMP, in order to provide a detailed evidence base to support the DPD. It will also incorporate advice and guidance on open space issues. Initial background research is already being carried out by the Planning Policy Technician and it is intended that this will be taken forward by the Senior Planning Policy Officer. It is anticipated that a consultation draft for Public Consultation will be brought before this Committee in Spring 2010, with Adoption by Summer 2010.

4.0 Recommendations

- 1) That the preparation of the Four Towns Area Plan and accompanying indicative timetable attached as Appendix 1 be approved for the basis of discussions with the Government Office for the Local Development Scheme.
- 2) That a report be submitted to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 14 September setting out the funding requirements to deliver the Plan.

Implications:		
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy		
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:		
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval <input type="checkbox"/>		
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage <input type="checkbox"/>	
There will be financial implications – see paragraph 2.1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
There is provision within existing budget <input type="checkbox"/>		
Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Decisions may have potential for income generation <input type="checkbox"/>		
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks <input type="checkbox"/>	
Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - 224 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
inherent risk score -		
residual risk score -		
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Additional staff will be required – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>		
Equalities and	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Human Rights	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph <input type="checkbox"/>				
Legal	Power: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers: Planning Policy Committee 14 April 2009					
Person Originating Report: Karen Britton - Planning Policy and Conservation Manager Ext: 2142					
Date: 15/07/09					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 19)

Appendix 1

Four Towns Area Plan: Key Points

Status: Development Plan Document (DPD)

Geographical coverage: The document will be prepared to provide complete policy coverage for the four towns of Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Raunds and Rushden and the surrounding rural areas in the south of the district.

Role and subject:

The purpose of the DPD is to set out the strategic policy for this geographical area. This will address:

- statement of vision and objectives
- strategic, environmental, social and economic policies
- development strategy and allocations

Timetable:

Stage	Date
Public Consultation on Key Issues	Jan/Feb 2010
Pre-Submission Plan Consultation	May/June 2010
Submission to Secretary of State	Sept 2010
Pre-examination meeting	Nov 2010
Examination	Jan 2011
Adoption	May 2011

Political management arrangements:

The Planning Policy Committee will agree the Plan.

The Raunds Area Plan Working Party and Three Towns Plan Working Party will meet to discuss respective issues for their area and combined meetings will be held if more general issues need to be discussed.

The respective Town and Parish Councils will also act as consultees, as will stakeholders and the wider community.

Staff resources required to produce the LDD:

Officers from the Planning Policy and Conservation Team will prepare the Plan: primarily 2 x Senior Planning Policy Officers. Consultancy input will also be required.