

COMT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
CABINET

27TH MAY 2008
10TH JUNE 2008
12TH JUNE 2008

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
THE CORE STRATEGY -
SUBMISSION DOCUMENT
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for the Cabinet to endorse the submission document for the Core Strategy before it is approved by Council for formal submission to the Secretary of State.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Core Strategy is the primary, over-arching document that guides and enables the strategy for the future growth and development of Huntingdonshire. Once submitted to the Secretary of State it will be subject to examination by an independent Inspector to assess whether it meets the tests of soundness.
- 2.2 The Council consulted on Issues and Options (the Regulation 25 stage) for the Core Strategy during May, June and July 2007 and on the Preferred Option (the Regulation 26) stage in December 2007 and January 2008. In addition to engaging with stakeholders (such as Parish Councils, the County Council, Primary Care Trust, Highways Agency, Environment Agency etc), the general public were also invited to comment. The Documents were made widely available at Pathfinder House and in libraries and local access points across the District and through an interactive on-line version on the Council's website. The representations made on the Issues and Options, the document 'Towards a Spatial Strategy' which discussed a number of strategic options and the Preferred Option Document have been taken into account in formulating this Submission Document.
- 2.3 The Core Strategy specifically takes account of the existing adopted Community Strategy and its emerging replacement, the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Core Strategy also has been prepared taking into account the emerging policies in the East of England Plan (which has now been published) and current and emerging Government Guidance.
- 2.4 The Core Strategy has been set out in two volumes (see appendix). **Volume 1** takes the form of a draft strategy document outlining the key policies and their reasoned justification. **Volume 2** records how each policy was assessed and evaluated and thus forms the necessary audit

trail outlining the development of the policies. It also includes, in an appendix, a schedule of responses to the preferred option and changes made to reflect the concerns raised.

- 2.5 When the Core Strategy is submitted a number of supporting documents will accompany it. These are available on the Members page of the intranet for Members to inspect and note their contents. The supporting documents are:

- Statement of Pre-Submission Consultation
- Final Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy (including Equalities Impact Assessment)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Huntingdonshire LDF Core Strategy
- Amendments to the Proposals Map
- Core Strategy DPD Soundness Self-Assessment

3. EVIDENCE BASE

- 3.1 The Core Strategy has been informed by a wide range of technical documents (the Evidence Base). A full list is set out in the Core Strategy Volume 1, Appendix 2. The most influential of these include:

- Huntingdonshire Community Strategy
- Sustainable Community Strategy (emerging)
- Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment 2005 and Update 2007
- Green Infrastructure Strategy

4. THE CORE STRATEGY

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Core Strategy will deliver at least 5,450 new dwellings, 85ha of employment land and up to 24,000sq m of retail development during the period 2006 - 2026. These figures are over and above what is already proposed in existing plans and in commitments and are considered as a minimum target to reach the challenging new levels of provision which are being advocated in the East of England Plan.

- 4.2 Until the time that the Core Strategy is adopted significant weight must be given to the policies in the approved East of England Plan together with the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policies and the saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and Structure Plan.

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 5.1 Cabinet is recommended to agree that, subject to a legal audit of the document, the Core Strategy as set out in the Appendix (as Volume 1 and Volume 2) and the documents listed in paragraph 2.5 above be submitted to Council for approval and to agree that any minor additional editing and updating which may be needed prior to publication be delegated to the Head of Planning Services after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As stated in paragraph 3 of the text.

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