

Meeting of the Council - 16th October, 2006

Report of the Cabinet

Confirmation of Joint Working with the other three Black Country Authorities on the Production of a Joint Core Strategy Planning Document

Purpose of Report

1. To confirm Dudley Council's commitment to working with Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils on the production of a joint Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

Background

2. Under the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, each Local Planning Authority is required to produce a public statement of its programme and timetable for the production of local development documents over the succeeding 3-year period known as the Local Development Scheme.
3. Dudley's Local Development Scheme gained Cabinet approval in March 2006 and contained a timetable for the production of a Core Strategy Development Plan to be produced jointly with the other three Black Country Authorities. This was proposed in order to take forward and plan for the proposals and recommendations set out in The Black Country Study submission and consequent revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy.
4. The preparation work for the proposed joint Core Strategy is now ready to begin in earnest but in order to comply with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act each of the four Black Country Authorities need to seek clearance to undertake such joint working. This requirement is also set out in Regulation 4C(a) of the Local Authorities (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), which makes it clear that making an agreement to prepare a joint Development Plan Document such as this requires full Council approval. In addition approval is also sought to undertake any necessary procurement of work and services jointly with the other Authorities to assist in the production of the document as well as associated community involvement and consultation.
5. On consideration of the above information, the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 13th September, 2006, resolved to recommend the Council to approve the recommendations set out in paragraph 11 and 12 below.

Finance

6. The joint Core Strategy itself will be produced using existing budgets and resources dedicated to the production of Development Plan Documents and other such statutory planning documents. Whereas it is intended that any additional work arising will be funded from existing budgets, if these prove inadequate Members will be notified accordingly.

Law

7. The production of a Core Strategy as a Development Plan Document is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
8. Regulation 4C(a) of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) stipulates that making an agreement to prepare a joint Development Plan Document requires full Council approval.
9. In addition, Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, allows the Council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the economic or environmental well-being of the area.

Equality Impact

10. The joint Core Strategy will set the planning framework for the development of the Borough, as well as the rest of the Black Country up to 2021. The Core Strategy will seek to ensure that sufficient homes, shops and employment, social, educational and recreational facilities are planned and provided for in that time to meet the needs of all communities and everyone within those communities. This will include meeting the needs of children and young people seeking to provide sufficient facilities for them as well as having a positive effect for future generations.

Recommendations

11. That joint working with Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton Councils be confirmed and approved for the production of a joint Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
12. That any necessary procurement of work and services, jointly with the other Authorities, to assist in the production of the document be approved providing that sufficient resources can be identified and evaluated.

David Caunt

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Leader of the Council