

RURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

9 JANUARY 2013

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

DRAFT MELTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2013

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report brings to the Committee the Draft Melton Local Development Scheme 2013 (MLDS) (see Appendix 1).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

.1 **It is recommended that the Committee:**

- **approves the draft Melton Local Development Scheme 2013 for the purposes of consultation with the County Council, adjoining local planning authorities and other bodies prescribed under the Duty to Cooperate;**
- **subject to no adverse comments being received, resolves to adopt the Scheme following the consultation process.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES/BACKGROUND

3.1 The Melton Local Development Scheme (MLDS) is the Council's public statement of its programme for producing documents that will together form what was previously referred to as the Melton Local Development Framework. The Government has announced that terms such as Local Development Framework, Core Strategy and Area Action Plans are in future to be replaced by "Local Plan". This means that the same term is now to be used for the totality of plans as well as for each constituent document.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that each local planning authority should produce "a Local Plan for its area", which can be reviewed in whole or in part. Any additional development plan documents should only be used where they can clearly be justified. The NPPF also states that supplementary planning documents (SPDs) should only be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery.

3.3 The Local Development Scheme has been reviewed in the light of this guidance, taking into account also the stage reached on the Core Strategy, and the need to make progress on the Sustainable Urban Extension (once approved in principle).

3.4 The current MLDS was approved in March 2011. This includes a programme for the preparation of three development plan documents (DPDs):

- Core Strategy;
- Sustainable Urban Extension Area Action Plan
- Land Allocations and Settlement Boundaries.

3.5 It also includes a programme for a Developer Contributions SPD and Community Infrastructure Levy Schedule. It also makes reference to the preparation in the longer term (after 2014) of a Generic Development Control Policies DPD and a Town Centre Action Area Plan, as well as other SPDs on Housing Need and in the form of development briefs for allocated housing and business sites.

- 3.6 It would take a considerable amount of time, staff and financial resources to take all these documents through the statutory processes to adoption, by which time the Core Strategy would probably have less than ten years left to run, requiring a further update of such issues as housing development requirements. This would in due course lead to a need for further land allocations. In addition to the preference for a single Local Plan, the NPPF states that Local Plans should be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements and be kept up to date. It also states that local planning authorities should where possible identify a supply of housing sites or broad locations for up to 15 years ahead.
- 3.7 It is therefore proposed that, with the exception of the submitted Core Strategy and the SUE Action Area Plan (to be re-named the Melton Mowbray North Local Plan), all proposed DPDs be “telescoped” into a single Melton Local Plan. This could incorporate the, by then, adopted Core Strategy and AAP, subject to any further changes which might be required, including the identification of housing requirements and sites to at least 2031 (or possibly a later date). These strategic policies would enable community-led Neighbourhood Plans to have clear guidance as to what they would have to comply with.
- 3.8 The site allocations part of the Local Plan could also consider whether and how further allocations might be needed to meet the longer term development requirements, including any further strategic allocations and other specific sites. Its development management policies (which would be kept to a minimum) would also cover the loss of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Government's thinning out of national planning policy (in as far as this has not already been done in the Core Strategy). It would also include a land-use strategy for the town centre, although site-specific guidance could be left to a Town Centre SPD (as opposed to the currently proposed Action Area Plan).
- 3.9 While such a wide-ranging document may take longer to prepare than would have been the case for the Land Allocations and Settlement Boundaries DPD, it would not be as time- or resource- consuming as the three separate documents, plus a Core Strategy review, currently proposed. It should be possible to get the “telescoped” Melton Local Plan in place by early 2016 (see timetable in the Draft Local Development Scheme 2013- Appendix 1).
- 3.10 The process used to require submission of the Local Development Scheme to the Government but this requirement has been removed by the Localism Act. However, in order to meet the Duty to Cooperate introduced by the Localism Act 2011, it is suggested that adjoining authorities and other bodies specified under the Duty to Cooperate, be consulted on these proposals.
- 3.11 Appendix 1 contains the Draft Local Development Scheme 2011 as considered by the Melton Local Development Framework Task Group. The Group recommended the revised LDS, subject to two minor changes to the schedule of Saved Policies

4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The MLDS will establish the programme for the production of the Council's local development documents (LDD).

5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications for the production of the MLDS document. The statutory procedure for the production of the DPDs contained in the MLDS programme will require significant budgetary provisions.

5.2 The draft MLDS includes a section on resources.

5.3 The New Homes Bonus is expected to continue to reward local authority performance in delivering housing growth.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 A local development scheme is required to be prepared by a local planning authority under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. .

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are no community safety implications concerning this report.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 There are no equalities implications relating to this report.

9.0 RISKS

9.1 The Local Development Scheme sets out the development plan documents which will be produced and when they are going to be produced. It is vital that local authorities do their utmost to adhere to this timetable. If they do not:

- development which is needed for the benefit of current and future residents of the area may be delayed or even shelved;
- the coordination of the allocation of land for housing and the necessary supporting infrastructure will be difficult to achieve; and
- the public and other stakeholders will lose confidence in the plan making process.

9.2 A risk assessment is included in the draft MLDS.

10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 It is proposed that the draft MLDS be subject to consultation with key stakeholders, including Leicestershire County Council and those bodies bound by the Duty to Cooperate.

11.0 WARDS AFFECTED

11.1 The Melton Local Plan will be borough-wide.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

12.1 There are no climate change implications relating to this report.

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Date: 19th December 2012
Appendices Appendix 1 Draft Local Development Scheme 2013
Reference: Council, C'tees & Sub-C'tees/REEA/2012-13/09-01-13/HR Local Development Scheme