

Cabinet

11 September 2019

County Durham Vision 2035

Key Decision: CORP/T&P/19/01



Report of Corporate Management Team

Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present the latest draft of the County Durham Vision 2035 document for approval.

Executive summary

- 2 A draft vision document was developed with partners as a shared vision for the county for the next 15 years.
- 3 An extensive public consultation exercise has been carried out where the draft vision was presented to Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and partnership meetings. A presentation, video and latest draft of the vision document (<https://www.durham.gov.uk/vision>) were used as the basis for this consultation exercise. Verbal comments were captured at meetings. In addition, forms were distributed to give attendees the opportunity to provide written comment.
- 4 A copy of both the video and the vision document were made available on the council's website together with a questionnaire to give those who could not attend a consultation event in person the opportunity to comment on the vision. The consultation ran from 12 June to 31 July.

Recommendations

- 5 Cabinet are asked to:
 - (a) Note the public consultation feedback contained summarised in this report.
 - (b) Agree the latest draft of the vision for consideration and agreement by Council and County Durham Partnership (**Appendix 2**) prior to launch at the County Durham Partnership event on 25 October.
 - (c) Agree to develop a branding strategy for the new vision;
 - (d) Review the delivery framework and monitoring arrangements for key strategies.

Public consultation

- 6 The consultation involved the following meetings:
 - All 14 area action partnerships
 - 11 County Durham Partnership thematic partnerships and sub-groups
 - 11 other groups including Cabinet Transformation Board and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with invitation extended to all other non-executive members
- 7 202 separate comments were received. The consensus from feedback at events is that all partnerships were supportive of the draft vision, subject to some suggested additions. 33 individuals took the time to write to say that they agreed with the ambitions and objectives contained within the vision and that they believed that it was well balanced. Nine people wrote to say that they hoped that positive working relationships would continue as partnerships have worked well in County Durham to date. One person wrote to say that they believed the housing section of the vision was good. A number of written responses were also received via email from individuals and organisations such as the Environment Agency, Believe Housing and Durham City Parish Council.
- 8 A number of comments made during the consultation were in response to the presentation and the video rather than the vision document and were expressing views on things that they hoped a new vision would address. In many cases, these suggestions were already contained within the draft vision document.
- 9 There were some comments which sought clarification indicating that the draft document was ambiguous, and amendment was needed to provide clarification to the reader. The main two issues were whether this was a

vision for the council or a shared partnership vision for the county and also when we mention 'Durham', are we referring to the county or the city?

- 10 There were a number of comments about key themes that people hoped we would pay attention to in the vision. These included:
- Rurality and the need for any future vision for the county to recognise the particular issues faced by rural communities;
 - The need to reduce carbon emissions as a county and mitigate against the ongoing effects of climate change;
 - The natural environment in Durham is a fantastic asset. Consultees pointed out that we need to protect our countryside and coastline and the biodiversity of our county for future generations;
 - People wanted to see more in the vision around a commitment to explore how new technologies could improve people's lives and provide examples of opportunities that should be investigated;
 - The exit of the UK from the European Union is clearly on many people's minds and how this may affect the economy of the county. It was felt that this should be recognised within the vision.
- 11 Further clarification has been provided together with additional content to address these concerns and the latest draft is presented in **Appendix 2**.

Revised vision document

- 12 The confusion expressed during the consultation as to whether this was a vision for the council, or the county is addressed through changes to the wording of the document on page 2.
- 13 There concerns of the minority of people who asked whether we are referring to County Durham or Durham City when we use the word 'Durham' has been clarified on page 2 of the document.
- 14 It was felt that there was scope to further emphasise the issues contained within paragraph 10 which people feel do not feature strongly enough. These may already be contained within objectives under each of our three ambitions, but it is felt that we could reassure the reader that there are certain underlying themes which we have used to shape our overall thinking on drafting the vision. These are contained within page 3 of the amended document.
- 15 There were comments about the relatively high proportion of people in the county with long-term conditions. This has been recognised to amendments in the document on page 7.

- 16 Several consultees commented that they expected to see what actions would be taken to address performance issues or that they hoped to see reference to certain key metrics. It was stressed that this is a vision document rather than a plan or a suite of performance indicators. It is our intention to use existing plans and strategies, where possible to monitor the implementation of this vision. Some existing plans and strategies may need to be amended to reflect the new vision. A review of the delivery framework and monitoring arrangements for key strategies will be carried out over the forthcoming months. An explanation of this is provided on pages 11-12.
- 17 Some people were surprised that we do not make more of the opportunities that technology will provide us in the future. The whole document has been reviewed and references to where technology could be used to improve people's lives have been added where appropriate.

Branding

- 18 A new branding strategy to replace the Altogether Better branding will be required. The strapline that was used for the public consultation on the new vision is 'Our future is Durham.' This has not been discounted but needs to be tested. We will work over the coming months to develop options for future branding.

Conclusion

- 19 Comments have been received on the draft vision for the county in an extensive consultation exercise.
- 20 These have been analysed and suggested amendments to the draft vision.
- 21 The approval route for the vision is as follows:
- **03/09/19** County Durham Partnership
 - **11/09/19** Cabinet
 - **23/10/19** Council (Constitutional requirement)
 - **Sept/Oct** Other partner agencies sign-off
 - **25/10/19** CDP Launch event

Background papers

Emerging Findings Document

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/media/26553/Durham-2030-a-vision-for-our-future/pdf/Durham2030-AVisionForOurFuture.pdf?m=636789245733670000>

Vision consultation page (includes vision document and video)

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/vision>

Appendix 1: Implications Schedule

Appendix 2: Draft County Durham Vision 2035 (version 10.0)

Appendix 3: Equality impact assessment

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

Corporate, service and financial planning are part of an integrated process. Ambitions will influence future resource allocation.

Consultation

This report details proposals for agreement and launch of the County Durham Vision which has been shaped following extensive consultation including:

- **Stage one:** Analysing all major council consultations over the last year as part of an exercise to develop issues that a new vision needs to address. (August 2018)
- **Stage two:** Consultation on our emerging findings document involving AAPs, partnerships and other interested parties. (November 2018-January 2019)
- **Stage three:** Consultation on our draft vision document involving AAPs, partnerships and other interested parties. (June – July 2019)

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equalities issues have been considered in the development of the proposed ambitions and objectives within the draft vision document.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

Crime and disorder issues have been considered in the development of the proposed ambitions and objectives within the draft vision document.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

Major risks have been considered in the development of the proposed ambitions and objectives in the draft vision document.

Procurement

None.