

**Economy and Enterprise
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
and Environment and Sustainable
Communities Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**



6th July, 2011

County Durham Plan

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise and Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees with supporting information in advance of a presentation by Stuart Timmis, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Economic Development focusing on the County Durham Plan.

Background

- 2 At a special Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee held on the 6th July, 2010 members of the Committee received a short presentation which provided an overview of the County Durham Plan, detail of the options available within the Plan and the consultation process to be undertaken.
- 3 Following the presentation members then carried out group work focusing on four key questions which had been asked during the public consultation events. All comments made by Overview and Scrutiny members at this meeting were then fed into the consultation process.
- 4 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee have received further update reports in relation to the development of the County Durham Plan at Committee meetings held on the 4th October, 2010 and the 7th February, 2011.

Joint Meeting

- 5 The joint meeting involving the Economy and Enterprise and the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the 6th July, 2011 will provide a further opportunity for Overview and Scrutiny members to participate in the second stage of public and stakeholder consultation focusing on the development of the Core Strategy for the County Durham Plan.
- 6 Overview and Scrutiny members will receive a presentation which will focus upon:

- What is the County Durham Plan.
- What is the Challenge.
- What has been learned to date.
- Ongoing work.
- Preferred Spatial Strategy.
- What development is needed.
- Housing development.
- Employment land distribution.
- Retail and town centre needs.
- Infrastructure.

In addition members and co-optees will also be made aware of the following additional strategies which will be subject to future consultation exercises:

- Low Carbon Energy Strategy.
- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Waste Strategy.
- Minerals Strategy.

7 Following the presentation members and co-optees will be asked to move into geographical groups for focused group work.

8 Discussion within the groups will focus around five key questions with comments from the groups collated into a response on behalf of Overview and Scrutiny which will be fed into the consultation exercise for the development of the Core Strategy. The questions are as follows:

- Have we got the policy direction right? With the focus on increasing economic performance.
- Does the distribution of housing, retail and industry reflect this?
- Other key issues in the plan are tourism, the rural economy and town centres, what are your thoughts on these?
- We are looking to increase renewable energy but only to a point which County Durham has the capacity to generate and also to provide the necessary waste strategy. Do you agree?
- Have we missed anything?

Recommendations

9 Members of the Economy and Enterprise and the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees are asked to provide comments at the special Joint Meeting on the 6th July, 2011, in relation to the five key questions identified above, which will be fed into the consultation process focusing on the development of the Core Strategy of the County Durham Plan.

- 10 That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee continue to receive update reports in relation to the progress of the County Durham Plan and contribute to the progression of the Core Strategy later in the year when the draft plan is published.

Contact: Feisal Jassat Tel: 0191 383 3506

Author: Diane Close Tel: 0191 383 6506

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - There will be a need to update the evidence base studies in the future in order that they remain robust. This will be carried out in-house where specialist skills and knowledge are available.

Staffing - None

Equality and Diversity - Equality and Diversity will be built into the wider LDF preparation process, particularly through the methods used for consultation, and through an Equalities Impact Assessment.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation - The extensive consultation process began on the 11th June 2010 and ran for 8 weeks concluding on the 6th August 2010 with further additional engagement leading up to the publication of the Draft Plan in July 2011.

Procurement - None

Disability Discrimination Act - None

Legal Implications - None