

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 October 2014



County Durham Plan - Update

Report of Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a further update in relation to the progress on the County Durham Plan.

Background

- 2 As Members will remember the County Durham Plan (CDP) is a key Council document, seeking to guide the future development of the County and to improve the lives of its existing and future residents.
- 3 Overview and Scrutiny have received regular updates and workshops in relation to the ongoing preparation/progress on the CDP. The last formal stage for the CDP was the Pre-Submission Consultation of late 2013. The consultation raised a number of comments to the contents of the CDP and these were considered and reported to Cabinet and then Full Council in early 2013.

Current Position

- 4 On the 25th April 2014 the County Council Submitted the CDP to The Planning Inspectorate. Submission of the CDP represents a fairly advanced stage in plan preparation and along with the CDP itself the Council submitted a large amount of evidence in support of the CDP and the approach it takes. Following Submission the next stage is the Examination in Public (EIP) into the Plan.
- 5 The Planning Inspectorate confirmed that the Submission was in order and appointed a Planning Inspector (Mr Harold Stephens) to hold the Examination in Public (EIP) into the CDP. This is the forum when those with concerns over aspects of the CDP can raise those concerns in an independent environment. The Council itself has appointed a Programme Officer to support the EIP. This person provides the link between the Council and other parties with the Inspector in order that he maintains his impartiality in the process.
- 6 The EIP is to be carried out in three Stages and will be held at the Emirates Cricket Ground in Chester-le-Street. Part 1 of the EIP will broadly examine the strategic matters in the CDP and commenced on

the 1st October, running until 13th November 2014. A Programme for this part of the EIP is available for Member perusal which can be accessed on the web page of the Programme Officer at <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/prog/>. The Inspector is then to produce an Interim Report on this finding for Part 1 of the EIP.

- 7 Part 2 of the EIP will follow in the New Year and will examine sites proposed in the CDP in more detail. That will be followed by an Examination of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Following the closure of the EIP the Inspector will send his Report to the Council, including possible recommendation of how the CDP could be amended. At this point Officers will have to assess the Inspector's recommendations and report these to Members.

Recommendation

- 8 That the members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the latest position regarding progress of the County Durham Plan.

Background papers:

The County Durham Plan Examination: Stage 1 Programme.

Link to the EIP Evidence Library:

<http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cdpev/>

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The Council has budgeted to fund the Examination into the Plan.

Staffing

Members of the Spatial Policy Team will provide the staff resource to handle the EIP with support from Legal and other RED and Council colleagues as required.

Risk

The CDP has been successfully Submitted so the current risk is getting the CDP successfully through the EIP

Equality and Diversity

The CDP has been subject to both Equality and Diversity assessment.

Accommodation

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Human Rights

None.

Consultation

The CDP is subject to several stages of consultation but at this EIP stage the Programme Officer provides guidance to those appearing at the EIP.

Procurement

None.

Disability Issues

The EIP venue is DDA compliant.

Legal Implications

The Council has appointed Counsel support for the EIP and its own legal team and Spatial Policy Team are involved to ensure the CDP process accords with legislation and guidance.