

# Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 June 2016

## County Durham Plan - Issues and Options



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

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#### Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee an update on the County Durham Plan following Cabinet approval of the Issues and Options for a six week consultation.

#### Background

- 2 As Members will recall, 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 Judicial Review and the ongoing preparation/progress on the CDP. Members will recall that the timescales for preparing the County Durham Plan were agreed by Cabinet on 6 April 2016. A summary of the timescales is shown below. The Issues and Options is the first stage in this process.

<b>4 Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet Issues and Options	<b>June 2016</b>
Consultation	<b>June/July 2016</b>
Cabinet agree Preferred Options	<b>November 2016</b>
Consultation	<b>Dec/Jan 2016/17</b>
Cabinet agree Pre-submission Draft	<b>June 2017</b>
Consultation	<b>July/August 2017</b>
Full Council agree submission	<b>November 2017</b>
Submission	<b>December 2017</b>

#### Content of the Issues and Options

- 4 The Issues and Options proposes a draft Vision and Objectives for the future development of County Durham up to 2033. The Issues and Options is accompanied by a suite of evidence which informs options for how much development is needed and where it should go.

- 5 In terms of employment land, early findings are presented in terms of requirements relating to different methodologies which result in a range of between 130 and 270 hectares.
- 6 In the case of new housing there are three alternatives for the number that are needed as set out below (and compared to a long term average rate of 1371 houses per year). The numbers of houses is based on Government guidance and projections of population change and an understanding of future projections relating to migration as set out in the demographic analysis by Edge Analytics (referenced later in this report). The resulting three options are based on average net completions up to 2033:
  - 1,533 houses per year (29,127 houses by 2033)
  - 1,629 houses per year (30,951 houses by 2033)
  - 1,717 houses per year (32,623 houses by 2033)
- 7 The distribution of employment land relates to where business want to be together with the need to ensure that local jobs growth can be promoted. Predominantly this relates to 6 key strands; A1 Corridor; A19 corridor; Durham City; Consett; Bishop Auckland; and the rest of the county including rural communities. The retail need analysis identifies Durham City and Crook as the only areas requiring further food allocations. Part of the justification of the housing distribution is ensuring that it relates to jobs, services and facilities. The issues and options provides four alternatives set out for the spatial approach to the distribution of housing:
  - Main Town Focus
  - Sustainable Communities
  - Sustainable Communities with Central Durham Villages
  - Wider Dispersal
- 8 At this stage the Plan does not identify specific allocations as this can only be determined when the preferred options for numbers and distribution are agreed. The Issues and Options does however issue a 'call for sites' for a number of different types of development should allocations be required.
- 9 The Issues and Options also include sections on a number of different topics including: a prosperous rural economy; sustainable transport; infrastructure; good design; climate change; the natural and historic environment amongst others. Throughout all sections a number of questions are set to enable respondents to submit their comments. However we will also invite responses on all aspects of the document.

## **Consultation**

- 10 The consultation on the Issues and Options must conform to the provisions of the SCI) and will consist of public exhibitions and drop-in events, the use of the 14 Area Action Partnerships, social media and the press. The consultation period will run from 24 June until 5 August 2016. The responses received will be fully considered and integrated into the policies and proposals that are brought forward in future stages where appropriate.

## **Evidence Base**

- 11 A robust and credible evidence base is integral to preparing a sound local plan. A number of new pieces of evidence inform the Issues and Options including:
- Demographic Analysis and Forecasts;
  - Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
  - Employment Land Review;
  - Joint Local Aggregate Assessment; and
  - Issues and Option – Viability Assessments in County Durham.

## **Next Steps**

- 12 Following the consultation period the comments provided by respondents together with additional evidence will be used to select our preferred option. In accordance with the LDS the Preferred Options document will be published by the end of the year for consultation. Publication of the Submission Draft will then follow in summer 2017 with Submission by the end of 2017.

## **Recommendation**

- 9 That the members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and provide comments to the Issues and Options consultation stage.

## **Background papers:**

- The County Durham Plan Issues and Options
- The Local Development Scheme

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – A budget is in place to ensure that the new local plan will effectively deliver the necessary and appropriate evidence gathering, consultation, printing and EIP costs.

**Staffing** – Resource required to progress the local plan is in place.

**Risk** – DCLG are introducing a mechanism to take control of the preparation of local plans if local authorities do not make satisfactory progress. Therefore delivery of the local plan as programmed would avoid this outcome however as long as significant progress is demonstrate it is unlikely that government would take this course of action. Changing Government legislation continues to be monitored however could have a significant impact on the timescales and livery moving forward. There is also a reference to the payment of New Homes Bonus linked to the submission of the plan which could see the loss of that year's payment if the target is not met.

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** – The local plan will be subject to EQIA as it progresses. The Statement of Community Involvement 2016 has been subject to an EQIA and has been prepared with the partnership and community engagement team.

**Accommodation** – None.

**Crime and Disorder** – None.

**Human Rights** – None.

**Consultation** – The programme of consultation has been agreed with the Council's Corporate Communications Team and agreed by the Council's Consultation Officers Group.

**Procurement** – None.

**Disability Issues** – The local plan will seek to address relevant issues, e.g. DDA

**Legal Implications** – Internal and external legal advice has informed all decisions on the preparation of the Issues and Options.