

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 NOVEMBER 2017

Title of report	LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES' JOINT STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN: DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION
Key Decision	<p>a) Financial No b) Community Yes</p>
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Purpose of report	<p>a) To advise on work undertaken on the Strategic Growth Plan b) To note and gain endorsement for the process undertaken c) To note endorsement of the Consultation Draft Strategic Growth Plan by the Members' Advisory Group (MAG), and d) To approve the consultation process and timetable.</p>
Reason for decision	<p>a) To demonstrate support for the collaborative working that has taken place across the seven Districts/Borough Councils, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership; b) To note that MAG has been engaged in and supports the proposed document; c) To ensure that all partners are in support of the process and that it is consistent across the County, and that all residents and stakeholders have an opportunity to make comments on the proposals; and d) To ensure that there is an opportunity to scrutinise the final version of the plan before it is agreed.</p>
Council priorities	<p>Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints</p>

Implications:	
Financial/Staff	There are no resource implications arising from this report. Officer time and funding for consultancy work have been contributed by all partners.
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, albeit the main risk control will rest with local planning authorities through the production of their local plans.
Equalities Impact Screening	An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared to support the Consultation Draft Strategic Growth Plan.
Human Rights	See above
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	The Consultation Draft Strategic Growth Plan has been prepared by all Housing Market Area Authorities and is endorsed by the Members' Advisory Group on which all authorities are represented.
Background papers	Strategic Growth Statement (August 2016)
Recommendations	<p>IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT:</p> <p>A) CABINET NOTES AND ENDORSES THE PROCESS WHICH HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN IN THE PREPARATION OF A DRAFT STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN FOR LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE;</p> <p>B) CABINET NOTES THAT THE CONSULTATION DRAFT PLAN HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY THE MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP (MAG) WHICH OVERSEES THE PREPARATION OF THE PLAN;</p> <p>C) THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE IS APPROVED; AND</p> <p>D) A FURTHER REPORT IS BROUGHT BACK TO THE CABINET TO CONSIDER THE CONSULTATION</p>

	RESPONSES WITH A VIEW TO CABINET RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE FINAL VERSION OF THE PLAN TO COUNCIL.
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1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Council has played an active role in the preparation of the Consultation Draft of the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan since its inception; the Consultation Draft Plan appears at **Appendix 1** to this report. The process so far has included Council endorsement of the Strategic Growth Statement, on 28th June 2016, which set out the key challenges, opportunities, and reasons to prepare the Statement, and outlined future work that would be undertaken. The Strategic Growth Statement was the subject of public consultation in August/September 2016 and responses have been taken into account in the preparation of the Consultation Draft Plan.
- 1.2 In preparing this plan, the Council has been working with Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, the other six boroughs and districts and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership.
- 1.3 The exercise is being overseen by MAG, comprising representatives from each of the local authorities, together with the LLEP whose representative attends as an observer. The MAG is supported by a Strategic Planning Group, made up of senior officers from the local authorities. The Members' Advisory Group is responsible for assisting in the proper execution of the statutory Duty to Co-operate, by which local planning authorities and other key stakeholders, including the County Council, are required to co-operate on strategic planning issues, including employment and housing land provision, affecting local plans. A key role for the MAG is overseeing the preparation of the Strategic Growth Plan.
- 1.4 On 6 November 2017, MAG endorsed the Draft Strategic Growth Plan and a consultation process and timetable. The LLEP Board will also receive a report on the Draft Plan. The LLEP, which is not a local planning authority, has participated as an observer in the process of preparing the Draft Plan

2.0 THE PROCESS THAT WAS FOLLOWED

- 2.1 Until 2010, the strategic planning framework for Leicester & Leicestershire was set out in the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009), the regional spatial strategy for the East Midlands. In 2010, however, regional spatial strategies were abolished by Government and local planning authorities were encouraged to consider strategic planning within the context of the '*duty to co-operate*' imposed by the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 In Leicester & Leicestershire, recognising that the strategy of the East of England Plan would be implemented through proposals in the current round of Local Plans, the local planning authorities decided that strategic planning for the longer term would be more effective if undertaken across the City and County as a whole. Responding to the important role of the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) in the delivery of infrastructure and economic growth, the LLEP became an additional partner in the process.

- 2.3 The Strategic Growth Plan has, therefore, been prepared jointly and on a collaborative basis by the ten partner organisations in Leicester & Leicestershire i.e. all eight of the local planning authorities, the County Council as highway authority, the City Council as a unitary authority with combined planning and highways responsibilities, and the local enterprise partnership. Leicester & Leicestershire is fortunate in that the Housing Market Area, the Functional Economic Market Area and the area covered by the LLEP are the same: having the same geographical boundaries for these areas means that it is easier to plan for the future. Although there is a need to collaborate with authorities outside Leicester and Leicestershire, the intention is that provision for housing and economic development needs will be met from within the area.
- 2.4 The Strategic Growth Statement, published in August 2016, stated that the ten partner organisations had agreed that the Strategic Growth Plan would:
- be clear about the opportunities and challenges that are to be faced
 - provide an agreed scale and direction for future growth, reflecting the evidence available and the will of the partners
 - create a single consistent strategic framework for Local Plans, economic investment plans, transport and other infrastructure plans
 - ensure that Leicester & Leicestershire is positively positioned to take advantage of private sector inward investment opportunities and national programmes for investment
 - provide the right conditions for the growth of indigenous businesses, and, at the same time, protect the area's natural resources, environment and historic assets.
- 2.5 The current Consultation Draft Plan takes forward this work. It sets out a strategy for the growth and development of Leicester & Leicestershire in the period to 2050. This time period allows the partners to think about the longer term needs of the area and to consider opportunities which might extend beyond the conventional timeframe of a Local Plan. Within this longer time period, however, MAG has considered the distribution of housing and employment land for the periods 2011-2031 and 2011-2036 so that the partners have a more detailed framework for the preparation of Local Plans.
- 2.6 The Strategic Growth Statement was the first stage in the preparation of the Plan. Having completed governance procedures in early summer 2016, it was the subject of public consultation in August/September 2016. The document stated the ambition of the partners was to overcome the problems that are experienced by existing communities, and to accommodate growth in new developments that have a real sense of place and purpose. It also explained that the partners wanted to raise the bar in terms of the quality of development so the focus has been on how the City and the County can be improved for local people and businesses, and, therefore, how growth can be delivered at the right time, in the right place, with the essential infrastructure that it needs. Consultation responses were reported to MAG in early 2017.
- 2.7 Throughout the discussions on the Strategic Growth Plan, the focus has been on defining a long term future for Leicester & Leicestershire, looking ahead as far as 2050. This end date was chosen, in part, to provide additional flexibility in terms of the potential solutions that might be considered, but also because other stakeholders were known to be planning for, and trying to secure funding for, projects with end dates which extended well beyond the timeframe of a Local Plan.

- 2.8 Since work started on the Strategic Growth Plan, other organisations have progressed their own work at different speeds (e.g. Network Rail, Highways England, the Midlands Connect Partnership) but there has been a constant dialogue to ensure an awareness of their emerging policies and proposals, and that projects considered to be vital to the future of Leicester & Leicestershire were incorporated in emerging plans, strategies and funding programmes.
- 2.9 As the Consultation Draft Plan has been developed, a number of events have been held for Members to keep them advised of progress; this included a presentation to the wider membership on 26 September 2017. In addition Cllr Pendleton has attended a number of MAG meetings, as the Council's representative, at which the shape, structure and content of the Consultation Draft Plan has been discussed.

3.0 Proposed Consultation process

- 3.1 With the Consultation Draft Strategic Growth Plan having been endorsed by MAG, a period of public consultation now needs to take place. The detail and the extent of consultation that is to take place will vary between the partner organisations, to provide flexibility for each to reflect their own practices. In practice, however, there needs to be an 'agreed minimum' which each local authority will adopt. It is recognised that the LLEP has a different role in this process.
- 3.2 The following will provide the basis of the public consultation:
- The Consultation Draft Plan
 - A short, simple consultation leaflet. It is anticipated that this would constitute an A3 sheet of paper folded in such a way that the reasons for preparing the plan are set out on the front page, the strategy diagram with explanatory notations are set out on the centre spread and the final page should provide details of proposed housing numbers and ways in which consultation responses can be submitted.
 - Copies of all supporting documentation
 - A standard presentation, with notes, to be used by individual organisations to ensure that a consistent message is conveyed.
 - A consultation questionnaire
 - One or more joint press releases
- 3.3 The consultation process will be managed, primarily, through the web sites for both the Strategic Growth Plan and partner organisations. It is anticipated that all material will be held on the web site for the Strategic Growth Plan with a link from partner organisations. Arrangements will also be made for comments to be submitted by post.
- 3.4 It is proposed that consultation should start during week commencing 8 January 2018 and continue for twelve weeks (thereby ending around the end of March 2018, depending on the start date).
- 3.5 All consultation responses will be reviewed and reported, in the first instance, to MAG. At the same time, consideration will be given to whether amendments to the Draft Plan will need to be made.

3.6 It is anticipated that the final version of the Strategic Growth Plan will be presented to MAG for consideration in summer/early autumn 2018. If agreed, it will proceed through the governance arrangements of the partner organisations.