ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	18 July 2012
3.	Title:	Local Development Framework Spotlight Review
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

On 20 June 2012 Cabinet agreed that the LDF Spotlight Review be noted and a response be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

The majority of the Review recommendations are accepted, as detailed in the table attached at Appendix 1.

6. Recommendations

1. That Cabinet agree the proposed response to the LDF Spotlight Review recommendations.

7. Proposals and Details

The spotlight review was commissioned following the LDF public consultation undertaken between July and September 2011. The purpose of the main review meeting on 7 Dec 2011 was to debrief members about how the consultation was received by the wider public and to reflect on any improvements for future consultations.

Although LDF is referred to throughout the report since the Spotlight Review was carried out the name of the document has changed to Local Plan.

8. Finance

There are potential budget implications arising from some of the review recommendations.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Public engagement is key to the LDF process. A failure to carry out appropriate consultation risks not only a lack of public involvement in shaping their local communities but also a potential risk that the plan may not be approved by the planning inspector later in the process.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The implementation of the LDF will make a positive contribution to all of Rotherham's Regeneration priorities. When adopted, the Core Strategy and supporting documents will further the objectives of the Corporate Plan and support the delivery of the Rotherham Sustainable Community Strategy by:

- providing sufficient good quality homes

- ensuring well designed, decent affordable housing

- providing employment land to meet the needs of the modern economy and support sustainable communities through access to employment opportunities

- promoting the "town centre first" policy approach to help the regeneration and renaissance of Rotherham Town Centre

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1: Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review – LDF Consultation

Council officers involved with the LDF consultation and subsequent Spotlight Review have contributed to the proposed response to OSMB.

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Appendix 1: Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review – LDF Consultation

Recommendation	Cabinet Decision (Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)	Cabinet Response (detailing proposed action if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)	Officer Responsible	Action by (Date)
Local Development Framework				
The membership of the Group should be amended to include one Elected Member per ward to ensure representation across the Borough	Rejected	The current membership arrangements for the Steering Group allow for a strategic overview of LDF preparation and consistency of member input. The steering group is not the decision making body, all decisions are taken at Cabinet. At all major stages of the process all-member meetings/seminars are held to ensure full representation and this will continue to be the case, e.g. prior to consultation stages and when finalising development sites for further consultation.	Bronwen Knight	
The role of Elected Members on the Steering Group is strengthened in relation to their role in the Statement of Community Involvement. This means strengthening their ability to influence decisions around consultation proposals.	Accepted	Member input to LDF consultation approach is welcomed. The LDF Consultation Plan (the implementation plan for the SCI) is discussed at the Steering Group and then reported to Cabinet prior to major consultation stages, seeking any updates or amendments, and this will continue.	Helen Sleigh	October 2012

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The Constitution of the Steering Group therefore is amended to enable recommendations to be referred to Cabinet for consideration	Accepted	No action required - the Steering Group constitution currently provides for items/recommendations to be referred to Cabinet.	Bronwen Knight	N/A
It is recommended that the LSP Manager attends the Steering Group meetings on a regular basis in order to work with members and planning officers to ensure that the links between the LDF & Community Strategy Visions are maintained.	Accepted	The Rotherham Partnership welcomes the opportunity to reinforce the linkages between the two key strategic documents through attendance at the group.	Carole Haywood	

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Localism Act 2011				
It is recommended that a protocol for the integration of Neighbourhood Planning Forums be developed & attached as an addendum to the Statement for Community Involvement. This should set out the process of linking together the LDF consultation process and the proposals of the Neighbourhood Planning Forum with the overall vision of the LDF	Accepted	This is accepted, the statement of community involvement will be refreshed.

The need to engage with parish councils and any neighbourhood forums in the future to respond to the new neighbourhood planning is recognised. However, the Council's current priority is to progress the Local Plan. We will continue to work with partners such as PAS and Planning Aid to raise awareness of localism and neighbourhood planning but will advise groups to engage with the Local Plan process prior to undertaking neighbourhood planning. | Bronwen Knight | 30 Nov 12 |
| The function of Community Planning undertaken by the Area Assemblies must be extended to take account of the new Neighbourhood Planning powers, so that Community Plans reflect the objectives & outcomes of the Forums. | Accepted | The Area Assembly will work with Parishes and Community groups to ensure that they are aware of the options available to them through the Localism Act and to ascertain the level of support needed to undertake NDP and NDO's etc. Outcomes from LDF consultation will be made available to Parishes and Communities for consideration when undertaking Community Planning and support offered in synthesising this data with community priorities identified through community consultation. | Andrea Peers | |

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Elected members will need support in order to take a proactive role in helping to determine how Neighbourhood Planning takes root in their local areas. The review recommends that training & guidance is offered at an early stage in the development of neighbourhood forums so that the opportunities and constraints of the existing Local Development Framework hierarchy of plans are immediately recognised as part of the neighbourhood planning process.	Accepted	There has been some training provided by CPRE, Locality and Rural Action Yorkshire on neighbourhood planning. A further event on Neighbourhood Planning was held in Rotherham town centre on 6 July for parish councils and community groups. To ensure elected members receive training we will take a paper to the member training panel requesting support for this recommendation. This may require additional resources.	Bronwen Knight	September 2012
Community Strategy				
The Strategy should reflect the vision of the Local Development Framework with further work required to highlight the integration between both documents. Emphasis needs to be focussed on the linkages between the	Accepted	It is a requirement for the LDF to be the "spatial expression" of the community strategy. Liaison with the LSP has been undertaken to achieve this. Details of the integration of the LDF and the Community Strategy which details the linkages between visions and themes/objectives are attached	Bronwen Knight	Complete

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Community Strategy vision themes and the LDF vision and strategic objectives set out in the draft Core Strategy.		(taken from the Core Strategy).		
Public Meetings				
Officers of the Council will attend public meetings subject to the following criteria: That the meeting is formally chaired and the Chair (not necessarily a Members) has met with officers prior to the meeting to agree agenda, format etc. Officers consult with Members prior to a public meeting to discuss agenda & probable issues to be raised Before attending a public meeting, officers should be satisfied that all health & safety regulations are met and that the Council is able to meet its	Rejected	The drop in sessions are public meetings in that all members of the community are invited to attend but are managed such that every attendee can collect information, speak to an officer, raise any queries and at most events seek independent advice. Experience of previous consultation and advice from PAS and Planning Aid has shown that holding drop-in sessions in each locality where members of the public can view details of documents and plans and receive independent advice from Planning Aid, as well as receive advice from Council planners, is the most productive way of providing information and receiving feedback. Public meetings held in the past have been difficult to manage and result in little meaningful feedback to the LDF. Holding the maximum amount of drop-in sessions with available resources to ensure coverage of the Borough means that resourcing ad hoc public meetings is not possible.	Bronwen Knight	

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duty of care to them; Elected members are informed whether or not council officers will be in attendance; That hospitality arrangements are reviewed – such as the provision of refreshments, acoustics/sound systems etc. That public meeting's are held if they are judged to be the best means of communication for the issues and all other options have been considered		Holding scheduled public drop-in sessions enables public engagement to be well planned, advertised and resourced and also allows for individual members of the public to have face to face discussions with planners to air their views. Such engagement is not possible at a traditional public meeting.		
Area Assemblies *The review recognises that Area Assemblies are an ideal vehicle for consultation with the local communities, parish councils & elected members. Therefore, for future LDF consultations:*				
Area Assembly staff should be involved in the planning of the consultation exercise;	Accepted	It very useful for Area Assembly staff to organise public consultation events due to their local knowledge and contacts and this should continue.	Andrea Peers	

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As non planners, AA staff require more training on the LDF principles to enable them to support residents & others attending events	Accepted	Appropriate training will be provided as required.	Andrea Peers/ Helen Sleigh	Prior to consultation of Sites and Policies DPD
More resources need to be focussed on promoting & facilitating community workshops at Area Assembly level.	Accepted	Drop in sessions are based around facilitating interaction at a local level to provide information and dialogue on the process. Additional resources would need to be identified and dedicated for additional meetings as there are currently no resources available within Housing and Communities to support this process.	Andrea Peers	
Council Officer's & Partners *Officers & partners involved in consultation need to be able to be flexible under difficult & challenging circumstances. Recommendations to support their work are:*				
Be prepared to tear up the script and adapt your programme to the situation e.g. late arrivals/early departures from workshops. In essence work more on the community's terms.	Accepted	Officers will always try to adopt a flexible approach to community consultation and engagement.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD

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Need for lead-in time and greater effort in establishing contact with key community workers to cascade information out.	Accepted	Planning officers will work with Area Assembly staff to allow sufficient time to make key contacts and cascade information.	Andrea Peers/ Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Tailor programmes to the anticipated audience	Accepted	Consultation material will be adapted to suit.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Consider the need for refreshments for officers, volunteers and the wider public	Accepted	Refreshments for staff and volunteers are usually provided but budget constraints prevents offering refreshments for the public.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Planning 'jargon' is seen as fundamental to the consultation process as used in national & public spheres. However, all effort should be made to provide clear explanation of the interpretation to support understanding by non planners &	Accepted	Officers will endeavour to make the LDF process and consultation material as understandable as possible.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD

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community members;				
Increase the visual support included in the process by using maps & diagrams in public arena's;	Accepted	The existing approach of using maps and diagrams for LDF consultation will be continued and enhanced wherever possible.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Alignment of information relevant to specific areas may help to focus consultation in specific areas.	Accepted	Consultation material will continue to be "localised" wherever possible.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Advertising & Marketing LDF Consultation				
Advertising for meetings, events & focus groups etc, should be standardised across the Borough by creating a 'brand' for all LDF	Accepted	Meetings were held to prepare documents that would be used throughout the consultation. A generic feel was given to documentation with clear and precise branding of documents, within the overall branding guidelines of RMBC, which was important to reiterate ownership by the Council. These were then made available through meetings and at the consultation	Tracy Holmes	

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literature;		sessions. The language was defined through consultation with the Communications team. Although the content of documentation varied from meeting to meeting depending on localised issues the documents benefited from a standardised approach. This approach will continue for future consultations.		
Expand the distribution of leaflets as these were thought to be excellent in their content & information offered.	Accepted	Significant effort has been made to ensure wider distribution of leaflets and information. Discussion did take place at one stage as to whether to distribute leaflets to every home in the borough but it was felt that the cost would be excessive. There was very positive feedback on the content and the presentation of information and we are continually looking for new ways to distribute this information at a reasonable cost.	Tracy Holmes	
Identify more sites for advertising & leaflet distribution: e.g. national food chains/stores & local newspapers to include leaflet drops;	Accepted	More sites were suggested at the start of the LDF process for the distribution of information. An advertising campaign was devised with the Communications team to ensure that meetings during the consultation were signposted through local adverting media. Local interest groups were approached as well as individual letters sent to every person who had expressed an opinion in previous consultations. We believe that there is still room for	Tracy Holmes	

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		the development of distribution and see this as a learning process to establish the best possible methodology		
Parish Council Websites should be used for publicity re LDF Consultation process & advertising events & workshops.	Accepted	The overall parish liaison site at www.rotherhamparishcouncils.gov.uk can be used for publicity. There are also several jointly developed websites with parish and town councils so they can themselves can also display the information when needed.	Paul Griffiths	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD
Ensure careful use of colour coding on LDF maps (indicating designated areas for planning use) is clear and distinct to avoid confusion.	Accepted	The map notation and key did cause some confusion and this will be rectified in future consultation.	Helen Sleigh	To be built into consultation on Sites and Polices DPD

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Parish Council Members				
Members need to be involved from the outset of the process	Accepted	Events are held prior to consultation to brief parish councils and this will continue, for example briefings by officers at the EDS/Parish Liaison meeting, the RMBC/Parish and Town Councils Joint Working Group and the Borough-wide Parish Network meeting.	Paul Griffiths/ Andrea Peers/ Helen Sleigh	Prior to consultation of Sites and Policies DPD
They require training – this could be doubled up with Area Assemblies;	Accepted	This can be considered, subject to budget and staff resource.	Paul Griffiths/ Andrea Peers/ Helen Sleigh	Prior to consultation of Sites and Policies DPD
Planning officers should attend a Parish Council meeting to brief members – local adjacent parish councils could double up on this exercise;	Rejected	The number of parish councils and the timetables for meetings do not allow for every parish council meeting to be attended, hence the approach outlined above. Area Assembly staff also arrange appropriate briefings prior to consultation.	Paul Griffiths/ Andrea Peers/ Helen Sleigh	

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Members & Training				
The review recommend that Elected Members receive further training in the Management of Public Meetings;	Accepted	All of the member development related issues can be dealt with via the Member Development Panel. There is some (limited) resource to help with the delivery of training. However, in-house training would require staff resource that may not be available therefore funding would need to be available for external member training. Opportunities for no-cost or low cost training from PAS and Planning Aid etc. on planning-specific issues will of course continue to be pursued.	Deborah Fellowes/ Bronwen Knight	
Also, provide awareness training for elected members on the most frequently used consultation techniques with emphasis on interpretation of the results;	Accepted	Response as above.	Deborah Fellowes	
Encouraging Members to attend selected consultation events (e.g. focus groups) as observers;	Accepted	Members were invited to the drop-in sessions and are always welcome to attend and contribute to LDF consultation events and workshops. Efforts will be made to communicate these events to members for the next programmed consultation.	Helen Sleigh	

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Submission of the results of key LDF consultations to be reported to the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board.	Accepted	The main issues from the consultation feedback report that is reported to LDF Steering Group and Cabinet can be reported to OSMB.	Bronwen Knight	
That each new Municipal Year, Member induction includes training on the LDF process, Neighbourhood Planning & Community Consultation methods.	Accepted	New members do get a planning induction. Due to the timing of the impending Core Strategy consultation, this year's planning induction did focus on the LDF. Consideration will be given to expanding the member induction programme to include neighbourhood planning and consultation methods.	Deborah Fellowes/ Bronwen Knight	

Publication Core Strategy (June 2012) - Table 2: Strategic Objective Linkages

Strategic Objective	Core Strategy Issue Addressed	Rotherham Partnership Priority (2012 - 2015) / *RMBC Corporate Plan Priority (2011) **	Core Strategy Policy
1 - Scale of future growth	1,2,3,4,5 7,14	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities*	1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 33
2 - Green Belt	3	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities*	4, 5, 33
3 - Sustainable locations	1,2,3,4,5 7,13	*- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.* *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities*	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33
4 - Provision for housing	1,2,3,4,5 14	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 27, 28, 32, 33
5 - Retail and service centres	3,9,14	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.* *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities*	1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 33
6 - Provision for employment	2,5,7,8,14	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Making sure no community is left behind* *- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.*	1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 26, 31, 32, 33
7 - Local transport connections	1,2,3,5,6 7,14	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.* *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	3, 9, 14, 17, 29, 31, 32, 33
8 - Landscape, historic	10	*- Helping to create safe and healthy communities*	1, 3, 4, 19, 20, 21,

Strategic Objective	Core Strategy Issue Addressed	Rotherham Partnership Priority (2012 - 2015) / *RMBC Corporate Plan Priority (2011) * *	Core Strategy Policy
environment and settlement identity		*- Improving the environment*	22, 23, 24, 33
9 - Greenspaces, sport and recreation	2,10,16	*- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	12, 13, 19, 21, 22, 24, 29, 31, 33
10 - Biodiversity / geodiversity	10,14	*- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	3, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33
11 – Minerals	12	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.* *- Improving the environment*	26, 33
12 - Managing the water environment	11,16,17	*- Improving the environment*	19, 20, 24, 25, 27, 33
13 - Carbon reduction and renewable energy	6,11,13,14 15	*- Improving the environment*	1, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 24, 28, 30, 33
14 – Design	4,9,10,14	*- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	3, 7, 14, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 33
15 - Community well-being	1,2,11,15 16	*- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	1, 3, 14, 24, 27, 28, 33
16 - Waste management	13,15	*- Improving the environment*	See joint waste DPD
17 - Infrastructure delivery	1,2,4,5,6,8 15	**- Supporting the growth of a sustainable and competitive local economy** *- Making sure no community is left behind* *- Providing quality education; ensuring people have opportunities to improve skills, learn and get a job.* *- Helping to create safe and healthy communities* *- Improving the environment*	1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33

- Bold - Rotherham Partnership Priority.
- Italics - Rotherham MBC Corporate Plan Priority