

Environment, Development and Transport Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) Board – Local Plan progress
Date of meeting:	10 November 2017
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact Working in partnership across Greater Norwich will help to deliver infrastructure to enable growth, housing and job creation.	

Executive summary

A meeting of the GNDP Board is due to take place on 20 November 2017. The Board will consider a document for public consultation on policy issues and options for the Greater Norwich Local Plan (known as a Regulation 18 consultation). With the consultation due to start in early January 2018 there will be no opportunity for EDT to endorse the Board's recommendation in advance of the consultation. Consequently, the decision on the GNDP Board's recommendation will need to be taken under delegated powers. This report provides an opportunity for Members to consider the proposed consultation document.

The issues and options consultation comes at an early stage in plan preparation and seeks views on general issues as well as on 'reasonable' options. Only where there is very clear evidence are favoured options or unreasonable options identified. The proposed document includes questions relating to a wide range of issues including: the distribution of growth; housing needs; economic development; specific locations; transport and other infrastructure.

Recommendations

Members agree to:

- **Note progress on the production of the Greater Norwich Local Plan; and**
- **Support, in principle, consultation on issues and options, with the final decision on the 20 November GNDP Board's recommendation taken under delegated powers.**

1. Proposal

- 1.1. The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) Board oversees the production of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and makes recommendations for consideration by each of the partners. A meeting of the GNDP Board is due to take place on 20 November 2017. The Board will consider whether to recommend a document for public consultation on issues and options for the Local Plan (known as a Regulation 18 consultation). The consultation is programmed to run from early January to 22 March 2018. Any significant slippage in the decision to consult would result a reduction in the consultation period or a

delay in the plan programme because of the need to avoid the election period (at least one of the partners has an election each year). In order to keep to the timetable, it is necessary for EDT Committee to consider this issue in advance of the GNDP Board's recommendation. Consequently, the consideration of the Board's recommendation will be taken as an urgent decision under paragraph 7.1 of the NCC Constitution by the Director in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair. Cllrs Wilby and Clancy are both members of the GNDP Board along with Cllr East.

- 1.2. The three district councils remain the local planning authorities with the responsibility to adopt the final plan. However, as a full partner in the GNDP, the County Council, through the EDT Committee, endorses each stage. Service departments will be engaged in the development of the draft plan. The proposed consultation is seeking public and other stakeholder views on issues and options.
- 1.3. The draft Reg 18 consultation document. can be found under the papers for the 20 November 2017 GNDP Board <http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/planning/greater-norwich-local-plan/>
It covers a wide range of issues and some of the key issues for the County Council are outlined below.
- 1.4. September EDT considered a report covering GNLP progress, including a discussion of housing numbers. Since then the approach to calculating how many homes the Local Plan will need to allocate has moved on. The proposed approach now uses the Government's recently released draft methodology for calculating housing need; rebases the plan period to 2017; and revisits the approach to the contingency or delivery buffer. The latter includes additional allocations and likely windfall development to help ensure the identified need is met. The combined result of these changes suggests that the GNLP will need to ensure sites are provided for 42,900 homes of which 35,700 are already allocated or permitted. Therefore, additional sites will need to be identified for 7,200 homes. The overall level of provision will be sufficient to support the enhanced job growth targets of the City Deal.
- 1.5. Six options for a growth strategy are included. The growth strategy will help locate the sites for the additional 7,200 homes. The options are broad and strategic, outlining how much growth could be allocated to general locations and categories of settlement rather than to any specific place. All the options propose a common approach to locating the sites for 3,900 of the dwellings that both maximises the opportunity for brownfield growth in the urban area and ensures that there are opportunities in more rural locations. Each of the options takes an alternative approach for the remaining 3,300 homes. These options include: urban concentration; supporting the Cambridge Norwich tech corridor; a focus on transport corridors; and various levels of rural dispersal with and without a new settlement.
- 1.6. The document recognises the importance of infrastructure and asks questions to help establish needs. The section on transport outlines the need to include a policy on supporting strategic improvements which "will need to recognise that the County Council has identified the Norwich Western Link as one of its infrastructure priorities. As it develops, the GNLP will reflect progress towards delivery of the scheme".
- 1.7. At this stage we are developing options for consultation rather than determining a preferred way forward. As the plan develops we will need to ensure that the GNLP reflects County Council policies and priorities. For example, the County Council's health and transport agendas would require any new estate scale housing allocations to be located to promote active travel and provide for safe routes to schools.

- 1.8. The GNLP will also include site allocations. Consequently, there will be a parallel consultation on the sites that have been put forward by landowners and developers for consideration. At this stage, high level analysis has been undertaken to help inform the consultation. It is important that all the sites proposed are consulted on. Sites will only be included in the plan at the next stage of plan making and having been subject to more rigorous assessment.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1. There are no direct financial implications of this consultation. Staff support is managed through existing resources.

3. Issues, risks and innovation

- 3.1. There are no other significant issues that arise from this decision. This kind of partnership remains innovative.

4. Background

- 4.1. The County Council has been working successfully in partnership across the Greater Norwich area for a number of years through the Greater Norwich Development Partnership and through the Greater Norwich Growth Board. Working in partnership has helped bring significant investment for infrastructure to the area.
- 4.2. The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) Board oversees the production of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk. The Board is not a decision making body and its recommendations are considered by each of the partners. While the plan making responsibility remains with the district councils, in the spirit of partnership, the County Council endorse the recommendations of the Board as appropriate. This helps us discharge our responsibilities under the “duty to co-operate” and demonstrates unity of purpose, supporting the delivery of economic growth and infrastructure in the Greater Norwich area.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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