



# INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## *Committee Report*

**Public**

**Date of Meeting:** 15 December 2005

**Title:** PLANNING SERVICES BEST VALUE REVIEW

**Report of:** Head of Planning Services

**Report reference:** P. 42/05

### **Summary:**

This report and appendices gives the committee the scheduled quarterly update on the Best Value Review Improvement/Action Plan.

### **Recommendations:**

- That Members note the contents of this report.
- That Members agree that points B1, D1, F2, G4 of the BVR Improvement Plan are completed.
- That Members agree that points B2, C2, F1 will continue after the sign-off of the Improvement Plan.
- That Members agree to combine, when possible, Post Development Assessment visits with current site visits.
- Comments are invited on the Improvement Plan and what further evidence will be required by committee at their meeting on 9 March 2006.

Alan Eales

**Head of Planning Services**

**Contact Officer:** Martin Daley

**Ext:** 7508

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Report P.43/04

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members received report P.49/04 on the Best Value Review of Planning Services on 21 October 2004. It was agreed that members of the Improvement Plan Monitoring Group would make regular quarterly updates to subsequent Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings.
- 1.2 Further improvements to the plan have been made as a result of the Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Committee's comments at their meeting on 15 September 2005. The plan is attached as Appendix 1. Minutes from the September meeting are also attached as Appendix 2.

## **2.0 PROGRESS OF ACTIVITY WITHIN BVR IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **2.1 THEME A – Focussing on what matters to local people**

- A1 – A3 were completed in January 2005 with a report being presented to committee (P.13/05) on 7 April 2005.
- B1 - Work ongoing and will continue indefinitely. Officers have consulted with local businesses in key areas. Meetings have also taken place with the Chamber of Commerce, the Large Employer Affinity Group and businesses from the Willow Holme Industrial Estate since the floods. This consultation will continue with these organisations after the completion of the improvement plan in March 2005.
- B2 – Initial changes have been made to the validation of planning applications in order to improve the quality of information that is submitted and the standard of plans. This should have the impact of being able to read plans more easily and determine what applicants propose.
- C1 – Work ongoing. Monitoring of Section 106 Agreements has taken place, but will continue throughout the year. There is a new monitoring system being established and will be introduced next year.

- C2 – Work ongoing. Planning policies are still under review through the Local Plan process. Overview and Scrutiny Committee participated in the review of planning policies and attached for information at Appendix 3 and 4 are reports on how the recommendations of Overview & Scrutiny Committee changed the plan. Work on Planning Obligations policy has been impacted on by the ODPM's Circular 05/05 in July 2005. The work will not be complete until 2007.
- D1 – The recent Planning Questionnaire showed improvement. Out of one hundred respondents and regardless of which way the decision went 90.7% were satisfied with the service provided by the Council against 88% in 2001. (These questionnaires are held in Strategic and Performance Services. The questionnaires developed by CN Research will continue to be used by Planning Services indefinitely).
- D4 – The questionnaires developed by CN Research for use within Planning Services were presented to, and approved by, committee on 15 September 2005.
- E3 – It is proposed that Post Development Assessments are combined, where possible, with site visits that are currently undertaken. This will best utilise the restricted time of Officers and Members.

## **2.2 THEME B – Assuring the quality of development**

- E1 – Sustainability appraisal has been undertaken. A member of the Policy and Performance Team met with the Head of Planning Services on 28 September 2005 to further review Performance Indicators as part of the Council's commitment to continuous improvement within its Performance Management Framework.
- E2 – A review of the Enforcement Strategy has commenced and identified that whilst it conforms to current legislative requirements it needs updating in relation to enforcement of tree matters and hedgerows. This is to be undertaken in consultation with the Council's Tree Officer.
- F1 – The Development Plan is still under review and will not be accepted until 2007.
- F2 – This action has been completed. The Right to Speak has been amended and will be explained in the Planning Charter. The Constitution has also been amended to incorporate the changes.

- G6 – Work ongoing. The question of resource and expertise remains a concern and a potential barrier to service delivery in certain areas. SEE CONCLUSIONS FOR MORE DETAIL.

### **2.3 THEME C – Enhancing Customer Care**

- D2 – This will be done once the Customer Contact Centre is fully established. As part of the CCC exit questioners will interview customers after their interview. This type of questioning will apply to all services within the Authority.
- D3 – A Planning Charter will be written before March 2006. The project will be done outside of Planning Services and will be funded by money already in this year's Best Value budget.
- G4 – This action is complete and ongoing. Training sessions have taken place between Planning Services and Customer Contact Centre staff. This has developed into regular monthly sessions between Development Control (who have greater links with) and CCC.

### **2.4 THEME D – Reinforcing management systems to assure quality**

- Earlier meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to this Improvement Plan have covered these items.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

3.1 Further progress has been made since the last presentation to committee.

3.2 The improvement planning activity is on course to be completed by the end of this financial year, although – as detailed earlier in this report - it should be noted that much of the analysis, consultation and reviewing activity will continue to at least 2007. The final report will be presented to committee on 9 March 2006 when – providing the activity outlined in this report has been completed – final sign off of the plan will be sought.

- 3.3 The main area of concern remains the question of skilled resource within Planning Services. An example of the strain Officers are under is illustrated by the ODPM/Treasury recommendation that with regard to the number of planning applications received the Council should have ten Case Officers in Development Control, excluding the Manager. Carlisle has seven and a half officers including the Manager. There is a real fear that further strain will be put on resources as the Council has recently been declared a Standards Authority with respect of Major Planning Applications and will be open to further scrutiny.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- That Members note the contents of this report.
- That Members agree that points B1, D1, F2, G4 of the BVR Improvement Plan are completed.
- That Members agree that points B2, C2, F1 will continue after the sign-off of the Improvement Plan.
- That Members agree to combine, when possible, Post Development Assessment visits with current site visits.
- Comments are invited on the Improvement Plan and what further evidence will be required by committee at their meeting on 9 March 2006.

Alan Eales  
**Head of Planning Services**

**Contact Officer:** Martin Daley

**Ext:** 7508

**Action/Improvement Plan**

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### Action/Improvement Plan – November 2005

#### BACKGROUND

The Planning Services Best Value Review was part of the Council's Programme of Performance Reviews 2002-2005. The review itself was carried out between December 2002 and June 2004. The Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Committee approved the completion of the review - pending implementation of the improvement plan - at their meeting on 21 October 2004.

A monitoring group has been set up to check progress of implementation. Regular updates will also be presented to the Infrastructure O&S Committee until the plan has been fully implemented.

#### BALANCED SCORECARD

This plan will improve all aspects of Planning Services. With this in mind, a balanced scorecard has been added to the plan to demonstrate that different perspectives have been considered when conducting the Best Value Review and developing this subsequent improvement plan.

The balanced scorecard follows the accepted format of analysing the organisation from four perspectives. Some of the activities contained within the plan, and the associated measures and performance indicators, impact on more than one of these perspectives.

Customer Perspective  
Internal Perspective  
External Perspective  
Employee & Financial Perspective

#### KEY TO ACTIONS

- ✓ Action completed
- ✗ Action not completed by due date. Remedial action to be taken to ensure implementation
- ✳ Action not completed. No further action pending due to change in legislation or Council policy

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING: A **The need to Ensure direct links between the Development Plan and Corporate Activity**

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

#### **Key Challenge 2:** Review of the Carlisle and District Local Plan

*Link to Corporate Priority:      Ensure Carlisle is a safe and attractive place where people are included and feel they belong.  
Develop a sustainable economy.  
Improve local housing, health and well being.  
Provide sound Council Management.*

#### **Key Challenge 3:** Responding to change to legislation

*Link to Corporate Priority:      Provide sound Council Management*

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Targets (including timescales):</b>	<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Lead &amp; support required:</b>	<b>Measures (of outcomes):</b>	<b>Progress:</b>
<b>A1</b> City Vision - Review City Vision themes and Learning City themes against Local / Development Plans	To demonstrate clear links between community strategy and Local / Development / Business Plans by March 2005	City Vision and LSP Joint Strategy themes reflected in the work carried out by Planning Services	Chris Hardman - Local Plans with support from Martin Daley - Strategic and Performance Services	Agreement from monitoring group and O&S Committee that the key themes are reflected in all documents – June 2005	Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05
<b>A2</b> Local Strategic Partnership – Review themes in the ‘A Vision for the Future’ joint strategy document				(Awaiting the production of Action Plan to accompany the Joint Community Strategy - July 2004)	Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05
<b>A3</b> Support Corporate Priorities	To demonstrate clear links between the Corporate Plan and Local / Development / Business Plans by April 2005	Themes and content of the Corporate Plan are reflected in the work carried out by Planning Services	Chris Hardman -Local Plans with support from Martin Daley - Strategic and Performance Services		Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING: B The need to increase understanding of the Planning Service

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

**Key Challenge 4:** Developing E-government, including the submission of plans electronically through the Planning Portal and Submit-a-Plan and the development of GIS and LLPG to meet E-government

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

**Key Challenge 8:** Raising the profile of Planning within the Authority

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

Action:	Targets (including timescales):	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>B1</b> Engage with less vocal or obvious groups in the planning process (i.e. small businesses and voluntary organisations)	To develop relationships/partnerships with small businesses and other associated organisations	Broader range of views from across the community	Chris Hardman from Planning Service	Random check of planning applications for such groups, followed by pro-active follow-up call and subsequent improvement to such applications if required	No check on applications undertaken. However Officers have been involved in discussions with Businesses post the Carlisle Floods and more recently on the regional Economic Strategy through the Chamber of Commerce. This has enabled officers to get first hand accounts of what is important to local business and ensured that these views are reflected in responses to regional strategies and plans.

## Planning Services Best Value Review

<b>B2</b> Ensure those affected by developments fully understand the amendments made during the application stage	Contact those affected by applications with amended plans to assess their understanding and how improvements could be made.	Improved understanding by applicants and others of the process	Alan Taylor from Development Control	Reduction in the number of complaints and objections	Officers have improved the validation process for planning applications which should help to improve the quality and legibility of plans. Further checks on the quality/legibility to be undertaken.
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## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING: C The need to ensure community needs are met

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

#### Key Challenge 2: Review of the Carlisle and District Local Plan

Link to Corporate Priority: *Ensure Carlisle is a safe and attractive place where people are included and feel they belong*  
*Develop a sustainable economy*  
*Improve local housing, health and well being*  
*Provide sound Council Management*

#### Key Challenge 3: Responding to change to legislation

Link to Corporate Priority: *Provide sound Council Management*

#### Key Challenge 4: Developing E-government including the submission of plans electronically through the Planning Portal and Submit-a-Plan and the development of GIS and LLPG to meet E-government

Link to Corporate Priority: *Provide sound Council Management*

#### Key Challenge 5: Securing greater resources through increased fee income and the Planning Delivery Grant

Link to Corporate Priority: *Provide sound Council Management*

Action:	Targets (including timescales):	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>C</b> <b>Planning Obligations to give greater community benefit</b>					
<b>C1</b> Analyse sample of applications with S106 agreements and trace to where needs are identified	<i>Supplementary planning Document on planning obligations to be produced</i>	Greater recognition of the community's needs	Angus Hutchinson/Anthea Jones and Chris Hardman with support from Fiona Kenmare from Development Control and Local Plans		<i>Examination of S106 agreements information retained by legal services revealed the need for further monitoring to be undertaken. This will be taken up by the Service's monitoring officer in due course (no date set)</i>

## Planning Services Best Value Review

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Targets (including timescales):</b>	<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Lead &amp; support required:</b>	<b>Measures (of outcomes):</b>	<b>Progress:</b>
<p><b>C2</b> Review planning policies, including obligations procedures for Members and Officers</p>	<p>Targets subsumed by OPDM planning obligations document produced in July 2005</p>	<p>Better guidance given to Planning users Development of better two-way consultation and progress with applicants, both during and after applications Greater understanding by Officers and Members about responsibilities More efficient use of Officer/Member time Improve partnership working</p>	<p>Angus Hutchinson/Anthea Jones from Development Control, and Chris Hardman from Local Plans and Members with support from Mark Lambert from Legal and Democratic Services</p>	<p>General satisfaction amongst customers and reduced number of general enquiries about Planning Services Improved Member understanding and satisfaction with services</p>	<p>Planning policies still under review through the Local Plan process (ODPM produced new Circular 05/05 on planning obligations in July 2005) This will not be completed until 2007 In addition a separate Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations is to be produced once the Local Plan policy is adopted.</p>

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING: D The need to meet customer expectations

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

**Key Challenge 5:** Securing greater resources through increased fee income and the Planning Delivery Grant

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

**Key Challenge 6:** Competition and new charging structures for Building Control

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

Action:	Targets (including timescales):	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>D1</b> Seek customer feedback on their experience of the process by comparing results from BVPI Planning Questionnaire	Increase the ratio of positive comments to negative comments in surveys  Introduce a regular survey process for all sections of the planning service on a rolling basis	Streamlining process without reducing quality of service to the customer	Survey lead is Barbara Percival from Development Control with support from Lynne Wild of Strategic and Performance Services	Results from annual Planning Service Questionnaire	The survey has been undertaken and there was a 2.71% point improvement on the previous survey with over 90% still satisfied with the service
<b>D2</b> Question customers after interview concerning officer availability and planning related literature	Part of exit interviews from new Customer Contact Centre if established	Greater efficiency when dealing with customers' needs	All members of Planning Services	Customer feedback	Can only be established once CCC is properly re-established with available space for exit surveys
<b>D3</b> Ensure clear information is available for customers and planning staff on the expectations and standards for service	Produce customer charter (low priority)	Understanding from both parties of roles, responsibilities and expectation levels	Non planning personnel (Martin Daley SPS to be confirmed)	Confirm with Action Plan Monitoring Group	Customer charter not yet produced but additional information for applicants and validation checklist information has been produced

## Planning Services Best Value Review

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Targets (including timescales):</b>	<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Lead &amp; support required:</b>	<b>Measures (of outcomes):</b>	<b>Progress:</b>
<b>D4</b> Develop questionnaires to be used by all three sections within the service	A generic questionnaire produced by September 2005	A consistent, systematic approach to consultation with all external customers using the service	Management Team within Planning Services with support from Strategic & Performance Services	Approved by Monitoring Group and endorsed by O&S Committee	Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING E: The need to ensure a High Quality of Development is achieved

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

**Key Challenge 1:** Responding to the increased workload (number of applications) in both Development and Building Control to maintain and improve performance

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

Action:	Targets:	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>E1</b> Develop new indicators (if necessary) that directly relate to sustainability, and strategic environmental and quality of life assessments	March 2005	Sustainability Appraisal of Local Plan	Named Officer from Local Plans with support from Vivienne Coleman and Martin Daley of Strategic and Performance Services		No longer reviewed by the BVR monitoring group. Agreed by Committee – Report reference P.36/05
<b>E2</b> Review Enforcement Strategy		Tightening of procedures leading to prioritisation of caseloads	Alan Taylor and Chris Hardman from Development Control and Local Plans respectively		ECAID is now operational to improve the enforcement systems. An initial review of the strategy has indicated that it mainly reflects requirements of current legislation although updates are required for enforcement of tree matters and hedgerows.
<b>E3</b> Post development assessments	New procedures to undertake assessments of quality and impact of new development (Low priority)		This will be developed further with assistance from the Council's forthcoming Urban Designer appointment.		Proposal that post development assessments are carried out with site visits

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING F - To ensure that all planning staff are informed of planning service activity

The actions under this finding link to all of the Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

Action:	Targets:	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>F1</b> Sharing of the results of the development plan	Information to be passed to members of each team through normal comms channels (i.e. team meeting/TIR)	Developing of stronger links between internal services	Chris Hardman from Local Plans	Confirmation of info share to Action Plan Monitoring Group	<i>Plan still under review. Will not be possible until 2007</i>
<b>F2</b> Streamline the decision-making process	To be decided by management team and portfolio holder and communicated to staff by March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear reasons and understanding for decisions noted</li> <li>- Clear understanding of delegation in Development Control and Building Control</li> <li>- Stronger relationship between Officers and Members</li> </ul>	Management Team and Portfolio Holder	Agreement communicated with Action Plan Monitoring Group and Overview and Scrutiny	. Right to Speak has recently been amended and will be explained in the Planning Charter. The Constitution has also been amended.
<b>F3</b> Develop web based services	Complete review and prepare findings by April 2005	Equipment available is fit for purpose Improvement of accessibility Increased number of people using the web and reduction in number of 'hard' enquiries	Irene Maleney (information champion) from Development Control with support from Customer & Information Services and Strategic and Performance Services	Present findings to Action Plan Monitoring Group	Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### FINDING G: A need to reinforce Management Systems to Assure Quality

The actions under this finding link to the following Key Challenges contained within the Business Plan:

#### **Key Challenge 8:** Raising the profile of Planning within the Authority

*Link to Corporate Priority: Provide sound Council Management*

<b>Action:</b>	<b>Targets:</b>	<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Lead &amp; support required:</b>	<b>Measures (of outcomes):</b>	<b>Progress:</b>
<b>G1</b> Strengthen the links with other Business Units	<i>Survey of other Business Units</i>	Consistent, corporate approach to service provision	NAME from Local Plans with support from Strategic and Performance Services	Business Plan monitoring reports	No longer reviewed by the BVR monitoring group. Agreed by Committee – Report reference P.36/05
<b>G2</b> Improve Business Planning process	Develop stronger cross-authority and intra-service reporting systems by end September 2004 and end January 2005 respectively	Clear links demonstrated between Action Plan, Business Plan and Corporate Priorities	Planning Services with support from Strategic and Performance Services and CMT	Endorsement of systems from Overview and Scrutiny Committees	No longer reviewed by the BVR monitoring group. Agreed by Committee – Report reference P.36/05
<b>G3</b> Review the use of external resource (i.e. consultant services)		Possible reduction of workload for current staff			Action completed and agreed at Committee – Report reference: P.13/05

## Planning Services Best Value Review

Action:	Targets:	Outcomes:	Lead & support required:	Measures (of outcomes):	Progress:
<b>G4</b> Establish links with customer contact centre	Develop Service Level Agreement by April 2005	Maximum efficient use of resource	Management Team from Planning Services	Report to Action Plan Monitoring Group	Training sessions are now completed and DC are continuing to meet with CCC on a monthly basis  G5 – is this now tied up in Pay and Workforce Strategy  G6 – allocation of workloads is still an issue compared to national indicator.
<b>G5</b> Review flexible working policy	- Identify individual staff needs by January 2005				
<b>G6</b> Review working practices within Planning Services, including the allocation of workloads	- Refer to corporate policy being piloted in Revenues & Benefits				

## Planning Services Best Value Review

### BALANCED SCORECARD

Customer			Internal Process		
Action	Measures	Linked to PI	Action	Measures	Linked to PI
B1 Engage with less vocal groups B2 Ensure understanding during application stage C1 Analyse S106 agreements D1 Compare feedback with BVPI Planning questionnaire D2 Questioning customers D3 Ensure clear information is available F3 Develop web based services	- Reduction in the number of complaints and objections - Results from BVPI Planning questionnaire - Customer feedback	BV106 - % new homes built on previously developed land BV109 a, b, c – Applications BV111 – Customer satisfaction rate BV179 – Planning searches BV204 – % of appeals BV205 – Quality of Service checklist	C2 Review planning policies E1 Develop new indicators G1 Strengthen links with other Business Units G2 Improve Business Planning process G4 Establish links with Customer Contact Centre	- General satisfaction throughout council with Business Monitoring Reports - Development of closer links with other business units - Greater understanding by officers and Members of Planning function	LP95 - Answered telephone calls LP306 - PIs reported on time
External Perspective (including legislation & partnership working)			Employee & Financial Perspective		
Action	Measures	Linked to PI	Action	Measure	Linked to PI
A1 & A2 Review City Vision and Joint Strategy themes against Local/Development Plans A3 Support Corporate Priorities E2 Review Enforcement Strategy E3 Post development assessments	- Demonstrable links between all strategies and plans	BV200 – Development Plan BV8 – Invoices paid on time	F1 Sharing of the results of the development plan F2 Streamline the decision-making process G3 Review the use of external resource (i.e. consultant services) G5 Review flexible working policy G6 Review working practices within Planning Services	- Improved Employee Relations and staff morale - Efficient use of available resource	BV12 Sickness absence

**Agenda Item No:**

**Appendix 2**

**Minutes of Committee Meeting  
15 September 2005-12-06**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Report P.43/04

## **INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2005 AT 10.00 AM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Dodd (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Allison, Mrs Crookdake, Earp (substitute for Councillor Mallinson), Im Thurn, Mrs Rutherford, Stockdale and Southward (substitute for Councillor Martlew)

**ALSO**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Bloxham (Portfolio Holder for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure and Transport);

### **IOS.84/05 PLANNING SERVICES BEST VALUE REVIEW – IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING**

A report of the Head of Planning Services was submitted (P.36/05) enclosing the scheduled quarterly update on the Best Value Review Improvement/Action Plan in respect of Planning services.

The report was presented by Mr Daley, Policy and Performance Officer, Strategy and Performance Services. Mr Daley reported that much progress had been made since the last presentation to the Committee. Significant improvements included the new systematic approach to consulting with stakeholders and giving applicants greater access to services through the planning portal on the Council's website.

The improvement planning activity was on course to be completed by the end of 2005/06, although some of the analysis had no finite period and would continue indefinitely. Two further meetings of the monitoring group would take place in November 2005 and February 2006 and reports presented to this Committee in December 2005 and March 2006.

One area that remained a concern was the question of skilled resources within Planning Services. All options, including the use of external consultants and utilising the pay and workforce strategy, were being investigated to address the problem but it must be noted that the lack of skilled personnel could act as a barrier to achievement in certain areas.

In considering the report, Members made the following points:-

- (a) the use of consultants to provide routine planning services was considered to be a very expensive method of providing additional resources. Members were of the opinion that ways to make planning jobs in Carlisle more attractive to potential applicants should be explored as a priority. A flexible approach to pay and conditions was suggested.

Mr Daley confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the Head of Member Support and Employee Services over ways to encourage more people to apply for planning jobs in Carlisle. He was aware that students had been employed over the summer period to undertake certain specific tasks for Planning Services.

Councillor Bloxham reported that the City Council did not develop 'home grown' employees as Planning Officers. Approaches were made to Universities in an effort to attract planning students to Carlisle but with little success.

The problem with workloads was exacerbated in the summer months with staff taking their annual leave. There had also been a number of complex planning applications lodged with the City Council recently and which took up a lot of Officer time.

- (b) A Member was concerned at the recommendation to leave the development of new indicators, strengthening links with other Business Units and improving the Business Planning process to be progressed as part of the Authority's improved Performance Management Framework, to be developed following the reorganisation of the management structure. Given that the reorganisation was likely to take several months to implement, the Member was concerned that progress would be made quickly enough in these areas.

Mr Daley responded that these matters would be worked on as part of the new Performance Management Framework and that links would be made between the indicators and the Council's specific corporate priorities. To undertake similar work as part of the Improvement Plan would be a duplication. This Committee would be able to monitor progress in this area through the regular monitoring reports which would be presented to Committee.

- (c) Whilst the Improvement Plan identified that there were now clear links between the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan priorities with Local Development/Business Plans, it was unclear how these were being taken on board in working practices. For example, at Development Control Committee there was no clear link as to how a planning application should be treated against any policies of the Council except planning policies.

Councillor Bloxham considered that the Council's decision to concentrate on two specific corporate priorities should enable Officers to address the implications in reports to Committee in future.

- (d) A Member noted that there were a number of omissions of information in the tables of the improvement plan and asked that these be completed when the Plan was next reported to Committee.

- (e) A Member questioned whether the results from the questionnaires would give an accurate picture of the standard of service being provided by Planning Services.

Mr Daley responded that the format for the questionnaires had been designed by consultants specifically so that a reasoned response was made to the questionnaire. He accepted that the decision on a person's planning application could influence the way in which the questionnaire was completed.

- (f) The Chairman asked that the Improvement Plan be reviewed to take into account any links with Carlisle Renaissance initiatives.

- (g) Members noted that the Planning Enforcement Team was having to prioritise their caseloads and that this function would benefit from increased staffing.

- (h) Members supported the concept of post development assessments and which could include more visits by Members and Officers to sites to view the outcome of development which has been approved by the Development Control Committee, and post decision consultation with people who had objected to development at the application stage to see if their worst fears had been realised.

- (i) A Member referred to the fact that applicants for planning permission were allocated a specific Officer to deal with their application. As a lot of Planning Officers' recommendations can be based on opinion, there should be a process whereby an applicant can request a 'second opinion' from another Planning Officer. Another Member thought that this would also be a good idea where there was a personality clash between the applicant and a Planning Officer.

Councillor Bloxham outlined the procedures followed by Planning Services to deal with planning applications and reported that all recommendations were reviewed by a group of Planning Officers prior to confirmation under delegated powers or by way of recommendation to the Development Control Committee. There were corporate complaints procedures in place to deal with any specific complaints by applicants over the way a Planning Officer had handled their application.

Mr Daley reported that exit interviews were being proposed for the new Customer Contact Centre to obtain feedback from customers over the way they feel they have been treated by Officers when dealing with the Council.

RESOLVED – 1. That the content of the report be noted.

- 2. That the Committee agrees that points D4 (Develop questionnaires to be used by all three sections within the service) and F3 (develop web based services) are complete.

3. That on the understanding that they are being reviewed elsewhere, the Committee agrees that Point E1 (Develop new indicators (if necessary) that directly relate to sustainability and strategic environmental and quality of life assessments) should no longer be reviewed by the Best Value Review Monitoring Team.
4. That the Committee agrees that Points G1 (Strengthen the links with other Business Units) and G2 (Improve Business Planning process) are now being progressed as part of the Authority's improved Performance Management Framework and should no longer be reviewed by the Best Value Review Monitoring Team.
5. That the Committee's comments be referred to the Best Value Review Monitoring Team.

**Agenda Item No:**

**Appendix 3**

**Comments made in the  
Deposit Draft of the Local Plan**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Report P.43/04

## **Report on comments made in the Deposit Draft of the Local Plan**

- 1.0 The Deposit Draft of Carlisle District Local Plan was presented to Council Members at Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, 4<sup>th</sup> of March and the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of May the report was approved by Executive and was then presented to full Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, to which it was finally approved for consultation.

The Deposit Draft version of the Local Plan was made available for a six-week consultation period from the 5<sup>th</sup> of July to the 13<sup>th</sup> of August.

### **2.0 22<sup>nd</sup> January O&S Committee: Changes made to the Deposit Draft of the Local Plan**

- 2.1 The Deposit Draft was presented to Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, to which the core policies of the plan were explained to Members. Many comments were made with regard to the above, which has consequently resulted in various changes to the final Deposit Draft of the Local Plan, as illustrated below.

#### **2.2 Core Policy 1 Sustainable Development Locations:**

Members requested that a definition of 'sustainable development' should be inserted into the Local Plan. The above amendment has taken place with an explanation included within the glossary of the final draft. Furthermore an interpretation of the selection of villages listed within Core Policy One was also requested, this has been included in the last sentence of paragraph 3.4, and now reads as follows:-

- 3.4 *Throughout the remainder of the rural area development will be focused on a small number of villages to support local services. These villages already have facilities and could accommodate further development of an appropriate scale during the Plan period. The villages selected in the policy already contain key facilities including a school and/or post office/shop and these are vital to rural residents.*

### 2.3 **Core Policy 2 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty:**

It was agreed by Members that the policy was too weak with regard to how it relates to the built environment. Therefore Members suggested that the policy be amended to become stronger. Consequently this has taken place with the words ‘ Development proposals should conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the areas...’ changed to ‘Development proposals must conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the areas...’ The whole of Policy two now reads as follows: -

#### **POLICY CP2**

##### ***Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty***

*Within the North Pennines and Solway Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and their settings, permission will not be given for development that would harm the special characteristics and landscape quality of the areas. Development proposals must conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the areas, including scenic qualities, landform, ecology, geology and cultural interests, so that these qualities can be enjoyed by present and future generations.*

*Major development of a national scale will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Development required to meet local infrastructure needs which cannot be located anywhere else will be permitted provided it is sited to minimise environmental impact and meet high standards of design.*

### 2.4 **Core Policy 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest:**

It was suggested that the policy should be strengthened to protect SSSI's. As a result of this the first paragraph of the policy has been changed from ‘Development which would adversely affect the nature conservation (including the geological) interest of sites....’ to ‘Development proposals within or likely to affect the nature conservation or geological interest of sites...’.

The policy now reads as follows: -

#### **POLICY CP6**

##### ***Sites of Special Scientific Interest***

*Development proposals within or likely to affect the nature conservation or geological interest of Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny and will not be permitted unless:*

1. *the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site as part of the national series of SSSIs; or*
2. *the nature conservation interest of the site can be fully protected and enhanced by the appropriate use of planning conditions or obligations.*

## 2.5 **Core Policy 3 County Landscapes:**

Members requested that the reference made to 'Corby' in point two of paragraph 3.26 should be amended to 'Great Corby'. This change has taken place and now reads as follows: -

2. *the area to the north west and west of the North Pennines AONB is important for its historic character and variety of attractive features. It has a rolling topography with prominent knolls and ridges, especially around Brampton, and a number of significant woodlands. There is also an important area of parkland at Great Corby which is on the register of Historic Parks and Gardens compiled by English Heritage.*

## 2.6 **Core Policy 15 Design:**

Concern was raised regarding layout and designs of new developments to plan out crime and anti-social behaviour. As a result of this, paragraph 3.75 has been amended and a sentence has been added to the end of 3.76 to reflect issues relating to design, as shown below :-

- 3.75 *Consideration must also be given to more detailed and site specific design guidance found in Supplementary Planning Documents/Supplementary Planning Guidance including the Countryside Design Summary and the Burgh-by-Sands Parish Design Statement (which will be updated and reviewed in line with the new Plan structure and format). Informal guidance such as site appraisals or concept statements should also be consulted where appropriate.*
- 3.76 *The inclusion of a landscaping scheme should be treated as an essential consideration in the design process, not an after thought. Landscaping schemes can take two forms: soft landscaping which includes tree and shrub planting, and hard landscaping concerning paving, walls etc. Where appropriate the Council may require the partial implementation of a landscaping scheme prior to the completion of the development in order to reduce the impact of the construction works on site in the interim period. The proposed development should be situated to reflect the mature growth of species above ground and landscaping*

*schemes should take account of the position of underground services.*

## **2.7 Core Policy 18 Renewable Energy:**

Members motioned a change to the wording of point four, of Core Policy 18, as it was unclear if the aim was for more or less waste. Consequently this has been changed and now reads as follows.

- 4. The proposal will seek to minimise waste. Any increase in levels of waste arising will be dealt with using a suitable means of disposal.*

## **2.8 Core Policy 25 Pollution:**

It was suggested by Members that pollution generated by uses of buildings and traffic impacts of people travelling to and from developments should be included within the final draft of the Deposit Local Plan. As a result of this, paragraph 3.111 has been amended to include such information and paragraph 3.112 has been added, regarding the Northern Development Route and its proposal to reduce levels of slow moving traffic. Both paragraphs now read as follows: -

*3.111 The Government is committed to improving air quality by reducing air pollution. The main sources of air pollution are emissions from road transport and industrial processes. Where an Environmental Statement is prepared to accompany a planning application an Air Quality Assessment must be included. A general Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by the Council setting out the objectives for decreasing levels of the nine main air pollutants that harm health and the environment. The situation is being monitored. The effects of traffic pollution are generally addressed through efforts to reduce the need to travel and through reducing dependency on private cars which is expressed in travel plans.*

*3.112 The proposed five mile (8.25km) long Carlisle Northern Development Route to the west and north of the City will improve the environment by removing 8,000 through vehicles per day including 600 HGVs. Measurements have shown that the highest rates of emissions are encountered in congested, slow-moving traffic. This will help to decrease critically high nitrous oxide levels along the main City transport arteries. Nitrous oxide safety limits are predicted to exceed national guidance levels at limited locations of greatest traffic flow in Carlisle in 2005. The planting of trees and woodland particularly along transport corridors is encouraged as a means of removing air-borne pollutants and particulate.*

## 2.9 **Core Policy 30 Public Transport, Pedestrians and Cyclists:**

Concern was raised during the meeting regarding shared usage of roads on new residential developments, and it was highlighted that maintaining a safe environment should be included within the policy. Consequently the last sentence of the policy has been amended to include this, see below: -

### **Policy CP30 Public Transport, Pedestrians and Cyclists**

*Existing provision for cyclists and pedestrians will be protected, promoted and enhanced. All new development, accessible by the public, should include provision for safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access, including secure cycle parking facilities where appropriate. New development should help to create places that are sustainably well connected with each other, providing the right condition to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.*

*In assessing the suitability of new developments account will be taken as to the availability of alternative modes of transport to the private car to ensure that new sites can be reached sustainably. In considering the layout of a proposal, care should be taken to ensure that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are placed before other traffic to ensure a safe environment for all.*

## 2.10 **Core Policy 34 Planning out Crime:**

Members suggested that Developers should consult with the Crime and Disorder partnership when planning new development. This suggestion has been taken into account, which has resulted in various changes to the Deposit Draft. Firstly an extra point in the policy (point 10) and an additional paragraph (3.139) has been added with regard to the above. Furthermore a sentence has also been inserted at the end of paragraph 3.141 to highlight the point made by Members. With reference to the above point 10 and paragraph 3.139 and 3.141 now read as follows:-

*10. The opportunity for involvement of Architectural Liaison Officers to advise on measures for designing out crime at an early stage in the development process..*

*3.139 Developers are advised to liaise with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO) as part of the 'Secured by Design Initiative' on ways in which both the physical and environmental security of a new development can be improved through design helping to improve security and reduce incidences of crime.*

*3.141 It is intended that this policy will take guidance further and ensure that the principles are applicable to all types of development. The guidance will be updated and relate this policy to the Council's work through the Carlisle and Eden Crime and Disorder Partnership.*

3.0 **4<sup>th</sup> of March Committee: Changes to the Deposit Local Plan**

3.1 **Policy EC1 Regeneration:**

It was proposed that the policy could be amended to apply to new regeneration schemes. This change has taken place with an additional sentence inserted to the end of the policy to reflect this, as illustrated below: -

***POLICY EC1  
Regeneration***

*Within the plan period the City Council will encourage proposals which seek to regenerate the economic and environmental capital of the District. Proposals for regeneration will be judged against other policies of this Local Plan to ensure that there are no adverse affects on locally important features particularly nature conservation or built heritage interest. This will apply to new schemes arising during the Plan period as well as ones under negotiation at the start of the period.*

3.2 **Policy EC2 Primary Employment Areas:**

Members requested that an explanation of B1, B2 and B8 uses should be included within the Local Plan in order to make it easier for the general public to read. This change has been included within the glossary of the Final Deposit Draft.

3.3 **Policy EC12 Rural Diversification:**

Concern was raised by Members that point four in Policy EM11 in the Adopted Local Plan, stating that 'a proposal for development in the rural area will be acceptable if any increased traffic generated by the proposal can be accommodated by the existing highway network', is not included in policy EC12. However Members were reassured that this point is covered within core policies of the plan. To confirm the latter a sentence has been added to point 4.46, of the policy, see below: -

4.46 *The concept of live/work units provides for small-scale employment uses to sustain the rural economy. They will be viewed favourably as a means of providing employment and/or diversifying existing rural businesses combined with ancillary living accommodation for occupation, only by those associated with the enterprise either as employees or employees and their dependants . Proposals will have to ensure that there is no adverse effect on the amenity of adjacent property or the surrounding landscape in line with Core Policies.*

### 3.4 **Policy EC 19 Overhead Power Lines:**

Members requested that power lines be placed below ground rather than overhead. The first sentence of Point 4.67 of EC 19 has been amended to include such information, see below :-

4.67 *In general the City Council wishes to see the undergrounding of existing and proposed overhead power lines throughout the District. A position statement published by the Countryside Commission (CCP 454) encourages electricity companies to consider ways of reducing the environmental impact of overhead power lines and associated pylons, particularly in areas of high landscape quality. Additional work undertaken by the UK centre for Economic and Environmental Development on behalf of Friends of the Lake District considered the Cumbrian context of overhead power lines and measures to reduce their impact. This policy seeks to support the implementation of the research findings to reduce the impact of overhead power lines.*

### 3.5 **Policy H3 Residential Density:**

Concerns were raised with regard to impacts upon traffic and parking that occur from large densities of developments. It was motioned that the policy should be made stronger to reflect other community concerns that result from increased densities of developments. A sentence has been added to the policy to reflect these issues, see below : -

#### **POLICY H3** ***Residential Density***

On new residential development the City Council will seek to achieve an average density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare in accordance with PPG 3. The level of density will be required to reflect the opportunity to provide the best use of land as well as taking into account site conditions and the nature of surrounding development. Developments close to the City Centre will be expected to be a higher density achieving over 50 dwellings per hectare.

### 3.6 **Policy H5 Affordable Housing:**

Members requested that the words 'where appropriate' are deleted from the first line of the Policy. This change has taken place and now reads as follows:-

#### ***POLICY H5*** ***Affordable Housing***

*The City Council will negotiate with developers for an element of affordable housing to be included in the majority of housing developments.*

### 3.7 **Policy H9 Backland Development:**

Various changes to point H9 were requested by Members. Firstly that the words 'where appropriate' are inserted between 'development' and 'in' on the first line of the policy. Secondly for an explanation of 'white land' to be included within the Deposit Draft of the Local Plan. With reference to the first point, the words have been included within the first line of the policy. However there has been no change to the plan to include a definition of 'white land'.

#### ***POLICY H9*** ***Backland Development***

Proposals for housing development, where, appropriate, in large back gardens or behind existing housing developments will be acceptable providing that:

- 1. the scale, design and siting of the proposal is appropriate for the site and is in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment; and*
- 2. there is no loss of amenity to surrounding properties; and*
- 3. existing landscape features are retained and additional planting is included as an integral part of the scheme; and*
- 4. appropriate access and car parking can be achieved.*

### 3.8 **Policy H12 Subdivision of Houses and Houses in Multiple Occupation:**

It was proposed by Members that the policy should refer to the high demand for parking in the East of the City and ensure that this is met. As a result point 5.60 has been added to the policy to include such information.

- 5.60 In the east of the City there are a large number of properties in multiple occupation. It is important that adequate parking provision can be made or is available in the locality.*

### 3.9 **Policy H13 Special Needs Housing:**

It was motioned by Members that the policy should include a provision of 'affordable housing'. As a result of this point 5.66 has been added to the policy to include such information, and now reads as follows: -

*5.66 This policy should also take into account the need for these homes to be affordable to their specific market.*

### 3.10 **Policy LC9 University Development:**

Members proposed that the reference to the University of Northumbria should be deleted from LC9. This amendment has taken place and now reads as follows.

#### **POLICY LC9** **University Development**

*Proposals for the expansion of University education close the existing base at Paternoster Row, St Martin's College at its base in Fusehill Street or Cumbria institute of the Arts at its base on Brampton Road, will be acceptable providing that:*

- 1. it is of a scale that reflects the surrounding area; or*
- 2. it results in the refurbishment of a vacant building; and*
- 3. does not detract from the amenity and quality of the surrounding environment; and*
- 4. satisfactory access can be achieved*

*Additional land is designated at Shaddongate for University related development to cater for future needs during the plan period.  
A development brief will be prepared setting out details of relevant Local Plan Policies for the area.*

### 3.11 **Policy LC11 Doctors' Surgeries and Health Centres:**

Various amendments to the policy were suggested by members. Firstly that the proposed development of a medical centre at Carleton should be included. Secondly that the policy is strengthened to make sure that there is no reduction in the level of service to residents in the Carlisle District.

- 3.12 With reference to the above a paragraph has been added to the policy to include the medical centre at Carleton, see point 8.29 in the final draft of the Deposit Local Plan. Furthermore a sentence has been added to the policy to ensure that there is no reduction in the level of services, the amendments are illustrated consecutively below.

*8.29 Planning permission has also recently been granted for the development of a medical centre at Carleton.*

## **POLICY LC11**

### **Doctors' surgeries and Health Centres**

*Land at Moor Road, Longtown and Fusehill Street, Carlisle is allocated for the development of two medical centres.*

*Proposals for the development of further medical centres, health centres or doctors' surgeries will be judged against the following criteria.*

- 1. the proposed location is accessible by public transport;*
- 2. appropriate car parking standards can be achieved;*
- 3. the amenity and quality of the surrounding environment, including residential amenity, is safeguarded;*
- 4. satisfactory access to the site can be achieved*

*Development proposals must ensure that there is no reduction in the level of service to residents of the District.*

### **3.13 Employment Land Allocations:**

The allocation of land within the District for employment was presented to Members. Concern was raised regarding the allocation of Harraby Green due to potential flooding impacts, which was resolved during the meeting. Additionally it was agreed that Brunthill should be allocated for a mixed use, which is partly a Regional Investment Site and partly a Strategic Employment Site, to which this change has taken place. Furthermore it was explained to Members that there was deficiencies in strategic employment site provision. Amendments to this paragraph have been made within the final Deposit Draft, with regard to the hectares of land at Brunthill and Kingmoor Park, see below: -

- 4.75 There are deficiencies in the strategic employment site provision. This will be rectified towards the end of the plan period with the allocation of 20 hectares of land at Brunthill. Land at Brunthill will provide an additional 10ha of Regional Investment Site. This land will be allocated post 2011 unless there remains less than 15ha of land at Kingmoor Park at which point it can be brought forward sooner.*

4.0 15<sup>th</sup> of April Committee: Changes to the Deposit Local Plan

- 4.1 **Carrs field, Caxton Road:** The allocation of this site was agreed by Members, however it was specified that a transport assessment of the site was needed and that there should be protection of the adjacent nature park. With reference to the above, the policy has been amended to include protection of the nature park, however there has been no further change regarding a traffic assessment of the site, this would be dealt with as part of the planning application in relation to comments from the highways authority. The changes made are illustrated below: -

***Carrs Field, Caxton Road***

*5.90 Carrs field is currently the home of Creighton Rugby Club in Carlisle. The Rugby Club is intending to relocate to the south of the city where improved facilities as part of the Garlands hospital redevelopment can be provided. This field will therefore become surplus to requirements during the Plan period as a privately owned playing field. The site is within close proximity to the Cumberland Infirmary and within 1 ¼ km of the City Centre. Land to the north is part of the Engine Lonning wildlife site and pedestrian access is adjacent to the proposed development. Proposals will have to ensure that there is no harm to the wildlife interest of the adjacent site.*

- 4.2 **Greta Avenue:** Members rejected the allocation of this site due to flooding and drainage issues. This amendment has been implemented into the final Deposit Draft, to which there is no mention of the site for a specific allocation.
- 4.3 **Waverley Gardens:** Members rejected the allocation for housing at this location as it was believed that it should remain greenfield. This change has been implemented into the final Deposit Draft, to which there is no mention of the site for a specific allocation.
- 4.4 Furthermore another eight sites allocated for housing were presented to Members which were all rejected, with the exception of HK Campbell School.

**4.5 Rural Housing Allocations**

- 4.6 Three sites in the rural area of Carlisle District were presented to Members to be agreed as allocations specifically for housing.
- 4.7 Nineteen additional sites proposed for housing development in the rural area were presented to Members and consequently not allocated. This change has been implemented within the final Deposit Draft, with no mention of any of these sites in the rural housing allocation list.

#### **4.8    Employment Land Allocations**

- 4.9    Urban and Rural employment land allocations were presented to Members. Approval of such allocations was made and has consequently been inserted into the final Deposit Draft.
  
- 4.10   In addition four other requests for employment sites were presented to Members; land adjacent to Burgh Road Industrial Estate, Land at Dalston, Land for Petrol Station and associated uses at Peter Lane and Land south of Carlisle. Members agreed that such sites should not be allocated for employment. Consequently this change has taken place within the final deposit draft, as there is no mention of the sites stated above in the employment site allocation lists on pages 89 and 91.

<b>22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2004 Committee</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Issue</b>
Core Policy 18	Questions were raised of what systems were in place for energy conservation. Additionally it was asked whether core policies could include stronger positive statements.
Core Policy 19	It was asked that more regard to energy conservation and efficiency should be introduced in the design process.
Core Policy 22	It was requested that the policy should include guidance on the acceptable height of bridges.
Core Policy 31	It was requested that the words ‘ , which is not objected to by neighbours’, be added to the end of the final paragraph.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> of March 2004 Committee</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Issue</b>
EC 6	It was suggested that housing should be incorporated within large developments such as Debenhams. Concern was raised regarding an environmental matrix of separate sites for different uses of development.
EC 10	It was suggested that the reasons for refusal of proposals that prejudice active use of vacant or underused buildings should be stated.
EC 11	Reference was made to point 5 of EC11 and what was included within the City Centre Shopping Area.
H1	Questions were raised as to why Cargo is not included on the first list of settlements.
H2	Concern was raised regarding traffic impact of new developments
H9	It was suggested that a definition of ‘whiteland’ should be included in the Local Plan.
H14	It was suggested that consultation with the Showman’s guild should be undertaken. Additionally it was requested that consideration to the policy title should be given to avoid discrimination.
T8	It was suggested that provision of facilities should be included.
LC10	Question raised regarding the re-examination of the wording in the final paragraph.
<b>15<sup>th</sup> of April 2004 Committee</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Issue</b>
Housing Allocations in the Rural Area	Members were in agreement of the allocations in the rural area.
Community use allocations.	There has been no change to the proposed community allocations of land presented to Members.

**Agenda Item No:**

**Appendix 4**

**Redeposit Local Plan Report**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Report P.43/04

## **Redeposit Local Plan Report**

### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Members received Committee reports on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and the 14<sup>th</sup>

April 2005 regarding the re-deposit version of Carlisle District Local Plan. Both reports were combined and then presented to Executive on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, which was approved as the basis for further consultation to be reported to the City Council. The report was consequently amended and presented to Council on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, to which a further amendment regarding land at Ellesmere Way was proposed. The report was finally approved for consultation on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

- 1.2 The Redeposit Draft version of the plan was made available for public consultation from the 8<sup>th</sup> of August – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2005.

### **2.0 23<sup>rd</sup> of March Committee: Changes to the Redeposit Local Plan**

#### **2.1 Policy CP 7 Renewable Energy**

- 2.2 Members requested various changes to some of the numbered points in Policy CP 7. Firstly that the words ‘the following’ are removed from point six, and secondly the words ‘adverse cumulative effects’ are replaced with ‘unacceptable cumulative effects’ in point nine. Both points have been amended in the final Redeposit Draft now read as following: -

*CP7.....*

6. That proposals would not cause unacceptable levels of harm to features of local, national or international importance; and

*CP7....*

9. *That they would not give rise to any unacceptable cumulative effects when considered against any previous extant planning approvals or other existing renewable energy developments.*

#### **2.3 Policy CP 13 Waste Minimisation and Recycling of Waste**

- 2.4 Members proposed that a joint strategy was needed to tackle issues regarding waste minimisation and recycling. In response it was believed that a multi-agency approach between the City Council and County Council would ensure this. Members requested that the Final Redeposit Draft of the Local Plan was amended to include such information, which is illustrated on page 40, point 3.59, see below: -

3.59 *The joint Cumbrian local authorities have in recent years been pursuing an integrated approach to waste management as part of sustainable waste management, placing an emphasis on waste minimisation and re-use as well as recycling. The primary objectives of the Joint Strategy have been to minimise the environmental impact of waste and to reduce the distance that waste travels to disposal. The City Council has waste management targets to meet which reflect national and regional targets. Whilst the Council's household waste recycling rate has gradually risen in recent years to 9.49% in 2003-4, this total is still 21% below the target set. Although the same trend is evident in the amount of composed waste the most recent figure of 6.99% of all household waste arisings composted is still 30% below the target. A proactive approach is therefore required to raise the profile of waste production and disposal by highlighting the identification of volumes, types and processes through waste audits. This approach will involve a number of agencies continuing to work in partnership.*

## **2.5 Policy CP 10 Protection of Groundwaters and Surface Waters**

2.6 Members suggested that the River Roe is included in Paragraph 3.104, relating to ground waters sources, as it is a major tributary leading into the River Caldew. This point has been included in the Final Redeposit Plan, and now reads as following: -

3.48 *Groundwater resources are an invaluable source of water for public supply, industry and agriculture, as well as sustaining the base flows of rivers. The Permo-Triassic Sherwood Sandstone formation comprises a major aquifer in the District together with abstractions from the Rivers Eden and Gelt. These sources are under pressure from excessive extraction and from pollution and once polluted they are difficult to rehabilitate leading to long term deterioration in the quality of the receiving watercourse. Recent samples of main river quality from the District's Rivers Eden, Caldew, Roe, Petteril and Lyne have recorded very good/good classifications, while the Esk was recorded as very good. Demand for water is increasing as a result of growth of population and industrial/commercial activity. Modern house designs now include many labour-saving devices which expend large volumes of water, examples being automatic washing machines, dishwashers and power showers. Initiatives that result in water re-use will be encouraged.*

## **2.7 Policy CP 16 Planning Out Crime**

2.8 Members requested that within Policy CP16 the security of car parks should be specifically mentioned, however planning out crime relates to all aspects of any planned development not only car parks and there has therefore been no change regarding this matter.

## **2.9 Policy EC 10 Food And Drink**

- 2.10 It was proposed that the word 'unacceptable' is included before the word 'disturbance' in point one of Policy EC10. This change has been implemented into the Final Redeposit Draft and now reads as following:-

*EC10.....*

- 1. The proposal does not involve unacceptable disturbance to occupiers of residential property; and*

## **2.11 Policy LE 25 Equestrian Development**

- 2.12 Members sought changes to the wording of points one and three of Policy LE25. They proposed that the words 'no detrimental effect' be replaced with the word 'unacceptable'. With reference to this point one was consequently amended. In relation to point three, there had been confusion over potential double negatives in the policy wording and having checked the policy it is believed not to be the case and no further change was made to point three.

*LE25....*

- 1 There will be no unacceptable impact upon the landscape and character of the area; and*

*LE 25.....*

- 3. the scheme will not have a detrimental effect upon nearby properties or surrounding land uses; and*

## **2.13 Policy LE 27 Undeveloped Land in Flood Plains**

- 2.14 During the Committee meeting Members were informed that the Environment Agency are currently developing a flood risk strategy. It was noted that Policy LE27 will be updated if any changes to the Local Plan result from this. Members consequently requested for the explanation to be included within paragraph 3.96. The policy (now point 6.103 in the Final Redeposit Draft) has been amended to include such information, as shown below: -

*6.103 The Environment Agency is developing a Flood Risk Management Strategy for Carlisle and Lower Eden. Improvement schemes have been identified for the Rivers Eden, Petteril, Caldew and little Caldew which upgrade existing defences A five year programme of construction work to improve flood embankments and flood walls will commence in 2006, significantly reducing the risk of flooding to the City of Carlisle. The City Council continues to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and other agencies to improve flood defences and reduce the impact flooding may have. This and the following policy will be kept under review and modified as and when more information becomes apparent.*

## 2.15 **Policy LC5 Playing Fields**

- 2.16 It was requested by Members that the Local Plan should refer to the Healthier Living Agenda in support of maintaining recreational open spaces within Carlisle's District. Point 8.6 (previously 3.128 in the Deposit Draft) has been amended to include such information, and now reads as follows:-

*8.6 This policy includes a presumption in favour of leisure, sport and recreational development in appropriate locations. Any new development should harmonise with its surroundings, and in areas of parkland, proposals for the erection of new recreational buildings should incorporate careful design, siting and landscaping. The campaign to promote healthier lifestyles has cut rates of heart disease and strokes. Walking, cycling and the use of public transport are being promoted instead of car use. The 'walking your way to health' national initiative aims to improve the health of more than a million people, especially those who do little exercise, by organising regular, short led walks through local parks and amenity spaces. Carlisle's Doorsteps Walks programme has this initiative in mind.*

## 3.0 **14<sup>th</sup> of April O&S Committee: Changes to the Redeposit Draft Local Plan**

### 3.1 **Policy DP 3 Carlisle Airport**

A Member expressed that the wording in Policy DP3 is too negative, however on reflection the policy provides for the airport to develop along with an allocation of land therefore no changes were made to the plan.

### 3.2 **Policy LC4 Children's Play and Recreation Areas**

- 3.3 Members raised concerns during the committee meeting regarding problems resulting from children, playing ball games on streets, emphasising that this is not a form of anti-social behaviour. Therefore it was suggested that impact surveys should be undertaken prior to play areas being built.

- 3.4 It was proposed that the wording of Policy LC4 should be amended to reflect members concerns. This has taken place with a sentence added to paragraph 8.7 (now 8.17 in the Final Redeposit Draft), see below: -

8.17 *The design and allocation of play areas will be overseen by the City Council's Culture, Leisure and Sport Services Business Unit. The sites should be suitably landscaped to provide a safe and pleasant environment and have pedestrian access. Any play equipment provided is to be sited at least 30 metres from the nearest dwelling so as not to cause nuisance to nearby residents. The location of play areas can cause concern however they are essential to the health and well being of children and potential misuse by others should not be a reason for lack of provision.*

### 3.5 **Policy CP 15 Public Transport Pedestrians and Cyclists**

3.6 At minute ISO 38/05 members requested that there should be stronger enforcement of the use of the pedestrianised areas in Carlisle between pedestrians and cyclists. Furthermore it was believed that issues of how cyclists cross the City Centre also needs to be addressed. It was proposed that such points should tie in with policy CP15.

3.7 As a result of the above, changes have been implemented into the Final Redeposit Draft of the Local Plan, in policy 3.63, and now reads as following: -

3.63 *This policy seeks to promote the use of alternative means of transport to the private car through requiring adequate provision to be made in association with new development and safeguarding and enhancing existing provision in line with guidance in PPG 13. This not only serves to reduce emissions and improve safety, but also enables those without regular access to a car to have access, promoting social inclusion. Cycling and walking not only promote social inclusion but also have significant health benefits and recreational value therefore existing or planned cycle and pedestrian routes will be protected unless a suitable alternative can be provided.*

3.8 During the meeting six sites brought to members attention to be discussed individually, these were; Lansdowne Close, Burgh Road, Garlands, St Ninans Landfill, UCC Dairy Site, Extension to Winsor Way and Greymoor Hill. As a result of discussions by members there was no further changes regarding these sites.

### 3.9 **Urban Area; allocated sites**

3.10 **Cavaghan and Grey:** this site was presented to members as a site allocated for a mixed-use development with 70% of the site proposed for housing and the remainder to be retained for an employment use. Members suggested that a commercial usage could be included on the site, consequently this has been added within the details of the site, see below: -

### **Cavaghan & Grey Site, London Road**

5.92 *This company continues to provide employment in Carlisle at its Durranshill site however the use of the London Road site is no longer viable and production has recently ceased. The outdated buildings will require demolition and it is considered that part of the site could be developed for residential use. As the site is surrounded by residential development, up to 70% of the site could be developed for new housing. The remainder of the site should be considered for employment use in order to reduce the overall loss of employment sites particularly in the Carlisle South area. Small commercial premises maybe suitable having regard to facilities in the local area and other policies of this plan.*

- 3.11 **Hilltop Heights:** Concern was raised regarding the development of this location due to potential impacts on traffic. As a result of this the details/criteria of the site in the Final Redeposit Draft require a Transport Assessment, as illustrated below:-

### **Hilltop Heights**

5.96 *This area is a mixed commercial area however space is available for additional development. An innovative design is required for this site to succeed comprising a mix of commercial and residential premises. A transport assessment will be required due to the mix of uses occupying this area and the access /egress onto the main arterial route of London Road.*

- 3.12 **Morton:** The allocation of Morton for residential development was agreed by Members to go ahead. However concerns were raised about the timing of development and the infrastructure required for development of this scale. Point 5.103 (previously 5.94) has been amended to include information that development cannot commence until 2008, and now reads as following.

5.103 *Development has started on the northern part of the original allocation at 'The Beeches'. The additional residential developments were subject to planning applications which have been called in and awaiting additional submissions before consideration at an inquiry. In preparing the information an environmental assessment has been undertaken which updates information in the Masterplan. As a consequence the number of dwellings have been increased to reflect a higher density of development. Development of this site shall not commence until 2008 when other greenfield locations have been developed and then shall be phased. It is considered that during this plan period 800 dwellings will be developed on this site with an additional 100 units developed in the following period allowing for a long term phased development of this sustainable extension. This site is not to be developed until such time as adequate infrastructure is in place.*

- 3.13 **Carlisle Racecourse:** The allocation of 43 units on the Northern end of the racecourse was supported by Members subject to highway issues being met. There was support of Planning Officer's recommendations of not to allocate other sites near the racecourse.
- 3.14 **Deer Park:** This site has been allocated for a mixed-use scheme which was agreed by Members, however reservations were made relating to access issues. The above concerns have been reflected in the details of the Final Redeposit Draft: -

**Deer Park**

*5.99 This site of a former building is surrounded by residential development to the south and east and employment uses to the north. Redevelopment for a mixed use of residential or employment is considered appropriate however a buffer zone will be required between employment to the north and any residential use. The site has provided a strong green presence in the area provided by the trees which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. This will affect access to the site and the position of any development in order that the health of the trees are not compromised.*

**4.0 Issues Discussed**

- 4.1 During both Committee's many issues were discussed between Members and Planning Officers regarding various policies in the draft Local Plan. Some of these were not planning policy issues and others were accommodated in different parts of the plan. Consequently no further changes were made to the plan. The final page of this report illustrates such issues.

<b>23<sup>rd</sup> of March Committee</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Issue</b>
Chapter 2	Query as to whether spatial strategies will look at the whole area rather than individual sites. Other requires related to city zoning, involvement of emergency services and specific area action plans.
CP 1	Concern that changes to wording may weaken the policy
CP 7	Query regarding supplementary planning document being produced for wind power/turbines
CP 8	Query regarding a supplementary planning document being produced for energy efficiency and conservation. Concern also was raised as to whether energy saving standards are adhered to, in new developments
CP 10	Question as to whether the Reeds Drainage System is referred to in the plan
LC 9	Question as to whether the goods avoidance line is included
<b>14<sup>th</sup> of April Committee</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Issue</b>
DP 1	Members giving thanks for concerns for Wreay been taken into account
DP 2	Question relating to the definition of 'environmental capital'
DP 6	Question regarding whether permission had been granted
CP 5	Concern of ensuring that minimum distances in the policy are adhered to
EC 4	Comments regarding young peoples interests and also filthy windows
EC 18	Consultation for telecommunication transmitter stations and masts
EC 19	Query as to whether power lines can be placed underground
H 5	Concern whether target percentages on all sites will be satisfied
H 15	Query of sites available for Gypsies and travelling people
LE 5	Question regarding if the Lower Viaduct is included in the river corridor
LE 10	Question regarding if the Cumwhinton site was included
LE 20	Query of wording of policy may avoid permissions causing visual impact to conservation areas
Greystone Road	Issue relating to flood defences
St Nicholas	Query relating to market research on requirement of flats, before development
Cumwhinton	Question regarding provision of a play ground on the site