



Report of the Director of City Development

Development Plan Panel

Date: 4 November 2008

Subject: Regional Spatial Strategy Review – Options Consultation

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

Executive Summary

1. Following the Adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy in May 2008, the Yorkshire & Humber Assembly are now leading on an early and partial Review of the document. This Review is primarily stimulated by the need to meet national requirements for housing growth and the receipt of further technical information concerning housing requirements from the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit (NH&PAU).
2. National guidance requires the partial Review to be completed by 2011. A consequence of this is a very compressed production timetable for the preparation of the document. An informal period of consultation on options is due to commence on 3 November and is to close in January 2009. Following this, formal consultation is planned in summer 2009 on proposed policy changes.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to alert Development Plan Panel members, to consultation on a partial Review of the recently Adopted Regional Spatial Strategy. Following the Adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy in May 2008, the Yorkshire & Humber Assembly are now leading on an early and partial Review of the document. This Review is primarily stimulated by the need to meet national requirements for housing growth and the receipt of further technical information concerning housing requirements from the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit (NH&PAU).
- 1.2 Whilst aspects of the Adopted Yorkshire and Humber Plan are consistent with strategic planning and economic objectives within Leeds, throughout the RSS process, the City Council has raised fundamental concerns regarding the scale and implications of proposals for extensive housing growth within the city – without any clear strategy for the identification and delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support and sustain such growth.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 National guidance requires the partial Review to be completed by 2011. A consequence of this is a very compressed production timetable for the preparation of the document. An informal period of consultation on options is due to commence on 3 November and is to close in January 2009. Following this, formal consultation is planned in summer 2009 on proposed policy changes.
- 2.2 Within this context, and with regard to the Adopted Yorkshire & Humber Plan, the Assembly have emphasised that, "...a partial review of the Plan should be undertaken by 2011 to ensure that longer term housing growth is planned and accommodated in the most sustainable way by identifying broad locations to meet longer term development needs, considering proposals for New Growth Points and Eco – Towns and other evidence".
- 2.3 At the time of preparing this report, the full details of the consultation material was not available. At a meeting of the Regional Planning Board (21 October), a presentation was made by the Regional Assembly regarding the scope and content of the material. Following comments made by the Board, it was requested that the material needed to be revised, prior to the planned consultation – due to commence on 3 November. By the time of the Development Plan Panel, this material should be available and will be circulated to members.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 Whilst subject to change, given the planning context, the material presented to the Regional Planning Board on 21 October, was primarily focused upon the issues of housing growth and distribution. The draft consultation document is sub divided into 4 sections as follows, with a series of more detailed questions for each:

Part A

What is the most important factor in why there is a need for more housing in the Region ?

Part B

How much housing should we be planning to provide in the future ?

Part C

Should any increases in housing provision be 'phased in' ?

Part D

Where should we accommodate growth in the sub areas ?

Part E

How do we update our approach to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople ?

- 3.2 These questions raise challenging issues regarding the scale and distribution of longer term housing development. Clearly, once the consultation material is available a more detailed assessment of the implications for Leeds will need to be made and an office response presented for members consideration (Development Plan Panel and Executive Board). It should be noted also, that the Assembly have planned a sub regional consultation event in Leeds on 20 November (although this is now oversubscribed) and at the request of the City Council, have agreed to run a consultation session on 10 December (10:00 – 12:00, in the Council Chamber).

4.0 Implications for council policy and governance

- 4.1 Once adopted, the City Council's LDF documents will need to be in general conformity with the RSS Review.

5.0 Legal and resource implications

- 5.1 None

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 At the time of preparing this report, the precise scope and content of the consultation material was not available but should be available by the date of the Panel and will be circulated at the meeting. Early indications suggest however, the principle focus of the Review is upon the scale and distribution of further housing growth. Given the City Council's concerns throughout the preparation of the RSS on this issue, it is therefore likely that further housing growth in Leeds (in additional to the already demanding requirements in the adopted Plan) will serve to exacerbate such concerns, unless this is of a more appropriate scale, supported with the necessary infrastructure and distributed across the region/sub region more appropriately.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 Development Plan Panel is recommended to:

- i). Note the contents of this report.