

To: Members of the Executive Board

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Our Ref: A61/GWHG
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Dear Councillor

**EXECUTIVE BOARD – WEDNESDAY, 27TH JUNE 2018 – AGENDA ITEM 18:
‘SUBMISSION OF THE LEEDS CORE STRATEGY SELECTIVE REVIEW’**

With regard to the above, and following the respective meetings of Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) and Development Plan Panel which were both held on 20th June 2018, please find enclosed the individual statements of the Scrutiny Board and Development Plan Panel in respect of the Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review.

As referenced in paragraphs 2.5 - 2.6 and the recommendations of the related Executive Board report, I would be very grateful if you could please incorporate these documents within your agenda packs for the meeting of Executive Board on Wednesday (27th June), to enable them to be considered as part of agenda item 18.

Yours sincerely

Gerard Watson
Senior Governance Officer

Executive Board 27th June 2018 - Item 18: Submission of the Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review

Note of Development Plan Panel Meeting 20th June 2018

Development Plan Panel (DPP) met on 20th June to consider the proposed amendments to the CSSR prior to submission to the Secretary of State. It was not possible to hold the meeting prior to release of Executive Board papers, due to the Local Elections in May and consequent Member availability.

The Panel **RESOLVED** –

To recommend to Executive Board that it:

- i) Notes the representations made in response to the recent consultation on the ‘Publication Draft’ proposed submission draft CSSR documents (under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).*
- ii) Notes the consequential changes made to the policies, which as amended now form the Core Strategy Selective Review Submission Draft Plan, and*
- iii) Requests Executive Board to recommend to Council that it:*
 - a) Approves the Submission Draft of the Core Strategy Selective Review (Appendix 1) for independent examination pursuant to Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended.*
 - b) Approves the Sustainability Appraisal Report (Appendix 2) and technical documents, in support of the Plan, for Submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination, pursuant to Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended*
 - c) Grants authority to the independent inspector appointed to hold the Public Examination, to recommend modifications to the Submission Draft Plan, pursuant to Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended;*
 - d) Delegates authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member, to (a) approve the detail of any updates or corrections to the submission material and any further technical documents and supporting evidence required to be submitted alongside the revised Submission plan for consideration at future hearing sessions, (b) continue discussions with key parties and suggest to the Inspector any edits and consequential changes necessary to be made to the revised Submission Draft Core Strategy Selective Review following Council approval during the Examination and (c) prepare and give evidence in support of the revised Submission Plan at Examination.*

Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors B Anderson, A Carter, Leadley and Campbell required it to be recorded that they abstained from voting on this matter.

In addition DPP commented as follows:

- that it was difficult to understand what is meant by “affordable housing” and who might be eligible for it. It was noted that this is causing confusion for the general public.
- whilst it is noted that the proposed policy refers to these issues, there is concern about the activities of Green Space management companies and the circumstances where Green Space may be allowed off-site via commuted sum.

As a result officers have committed to:

- produce an explanatory “non-technical” summary aimed at the general public to accompany the submission of the Plan in due course
- add a Green Space Implementation Note to the work programme of DPP, to help advise on detailed arrangements at the planning application stage and to closely monitor the implementation of the revised policy



Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review

Introduction

1. There is a requirement, in accordance with the Constitution of Leeds City Council for the Scrutiny of the development of key policies which form part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. The Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review was considered by the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) on the 20 of June 2018.
2. The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive Board of the deliberations and conclusions of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) in order to meet constitutional requirements and support the decision making process of the Executive Board.

Evidence and Information Considered

3. The Director of City Development submitted a report to the Scrutiny Board which outlined the scope and preparation of the Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review (CSSR). The Core Strategy was formally adopted by Leeds City Council on the 12th November 2014. The report set out the context and framework for the CSSR and clearly defined the chronology of CSSR key decisions and stages of preparation to date. The report confirmed that the Development Plan Panel has had oversight of the CSSR process since May 2015.
4. The following information which was also appended to the report:
 - Appendix 1 – Report of the Director of City Development to Development Plan Panel 20 June 2018, with the

Core Strategy Selective Review, Submission Draft Policies

- Appendix 2 – Core Strategy Selective Review Sustainability Appraisal, Non-Technical Summary, June 2018
 - Appendix 3 – Core Strategy Selective Review Sustainability Appraisal, June 2018
5. The following representatives were in attendance to participate in debate, provide information and to respond to Members questions and comments.
 - David Feeney – Head of Strategic Planning
 - Martin Elliot – Group Manager (Policy and Plans)
 - Robin Coghlan – Team Leader (Strategic Planning)
 - Nicole Walker – Head of Service, Legal Services
 - Cllr Peter Gruen – Chair of Development Plan Panel.
 6. We were advised that the selective review has predominantly focused on housing numbers, elements of housing quality, greenspace and the environmental performance of new housing. Population change and the delivery of affordable housing have also been key considerations.
 7. We were further advised that the review process is coming to a conclusion, and following further consideration by Executive Board and Full Council, the CSSR will be submitted to the Secretary of State to facilitate further independent examination by the Planning Inspector, who will address any public submissions regarding issues and process, in the context of Government planning guidance.



Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review

Deliberations and Conclusions

Preparation and Consultation

8. When considering the CSSR proposals we sought clarity regarding the key decisions and stages of preparation between 2015 and 2018. We were advised that formal consultation was undertaken in June and July of 2017 (regulation 18) during which residents were asked for feedback on any other aspects that should be considered. We were informed that additional points raised such as the need to look at employment and retail policies and wider issues such as transport, will be looked at during future reviews of the Core Strategy. A further round of consultation was undertaken in February and March 2018 on the scope of CSSR, We were reassured that consultation responses from individual bodies and members of the public have been considered and amendments to the CSSR were clearly reflected as tracked changes to demonstrate this.
9. We are satisfied that there has been rigorous input and oversight from Development Plans Panel throughout the process. We were informed that the Panel have looked at the evidence base and have influenced policy development over a number of meetings and a workshop. The evidence considered included the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), to inform the overall housing requirement figure, the commonality between housing numbers and job growth and affordable housing needs.
10. We acknowledged that due to the complexity of wording in the CSSR,

Development Plans Panel have specified that non-technical guidance for Affordable Housing and Green Space requirements will be prepared to better inform members of the public. This guidance will sit alongside the Core Strategy.

11. We sought clarity regarding the proposed housing delivery numbers in the CSSR and the reasoning for the locally proposed figure of 51,952 compared to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) consultation figure of 42,384. We acknowledge that some volume house builders stated a preference for a higher figure of 70,000. We were informed that based on local evidence the majority of Development Plans Panel members did not agree with MHLG housing number, and want to allow for economic growth and ambition.
12. Whilst in full acceptance of the explanation, we concluded that the presentation of information regarding housing numbers in the CSSR, particularly the reasoning for the proposal to deliver 51,952 units, needs to be to be more accessible and easily understandable for members of the public. In response we were reassured that a non-technical summary would be prepared.

Green Space

13. As a Scrutiny Board we are determined to support the delivery of sustainable green space and therefore sought reassurance about the provision of publically accessible and suitable green space.



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14. We were advised that the green space policy is already enshrined in the adopted Core Strategy 2014. The CSSR seeks to make specific changes with the intention to clarify the policy on green space provision, recognising that new housing development is the key route to providing new green space. There is an expectation that developers will provide accessible green space when constructing developments over 10 houses.

Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

15. We were advised that the CSSR seeks to increase affordable housing provision from 5% to 7% (in the city centre and inner areas of the District, with existing targets for all other areas remaining unchanged at 15% and 35%), with flexibility for commuted sums, to respond to the needs of individual developers. We did express some scepticism regarding the delivery of affordable housing on site and sought reassurance that the Council would be robust through the planning process in ensuring that developments deliver what is expected.

16. We stated our concern regarding the reality of purchasing 'affordable' dwellings for residents with low incomes. We were advised that the Leeds approach has been to develop affordable homes policy in full consideration of household incomes. Policy H4 is not being changed. This policy seeks to deliver a mix of dwellings, to provide options for all residents. The delivery of 51952 units will include a range of house sizes across Leeds, of different tenures, including council housing, and also

including the return of long term empty properties back into use.

17. We resolved as a Scrutiny Board to continue monitoring the delivery of affordable housing and a suitable housing mix that meets the needs of Leeds residents.

Housing Land Distribution

18. We sought clarity regarding the distribution of housing land detailed in Spatial Policy 7 of the draft CSSR. We were advised that housing needs exist to different degrees throughout Leeds and that all areas have been considered for housing development, recognising that people do not always want to move into inner city areas when starting on the housing ladder. It was explained that the percentage figures for distribution are intended as a guide and were agreed through the SHMA in 2011.

19. It was acknowledged that the percentage of housing land is higher in the inner city and in East Leeds, however further explanation clarified that during the last 5 years the inner areas of Leeds have accommodated greater numbers of housing through various initiatives with a focus on investment and regeneration to deliver growth. It was also explained that development in these areas is also sustainable in terms of transport connections and proximity to jobs.

Further Conclusions

20. Following our inquiry into Sustainable Development we want to reinforce the importance of ensuring that the social and environmental aspects of



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sustainable development are a core focus all future housing development and economic growth. We acknowledge, however, (as stated in our Inquiry conclusions) that the concentration of Government Planning guidance primarily on economic considerations regrettably means that there are serious constraints on the Council's ability to address environmental and, in particular, social infrastructure as part of the Core Strategy process.

21. We fully support the robust position taken by the Council in the rejection of requests for a much inflated housing delivery target of 70,000, and requests to diminish or reduce minimum space standards and green space requirements.

Recommendation

The Executive Board is recommended to note the deliberations and conclusions of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) when considering the Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review submission.

Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)
Statement for the Executive Board - Leeds Core Strategy Selective Review
20 June 2018