

## **Scrutiny Board: Children's Services – Thursday 25th February 2010**

### **Briefing Note: Development in Leeds and its impact on Population**

#### **1.0 Context**

1.1 The Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) is reviewing the impact of population growth for children's services in Leeds. The Board is focusing on key questions in relation to services that affect children and young people:

- The availability, timeliness and accuracy of local population change data (how good is our information and how do we make it better?)
- The use that is made of available data in planning service provision (how well do we use the information, and how can we improve?)
- The reasons for population growth, and the consequent implications for services in terms of both universal services and also specific areas of additional demand (what service changes do we need to make because of population growth?)

1.2 To ensure that these questions are answered robustly, further information has been requested from the Planning Division of City Development, regarding the development within the city and its likely impact on population.

1.3 This note attempts to address the request made of Planning, taking into consideration the three questions that the board is focusing on.

#### **2.0 Planning Framework:**

2.1 Following reforms to the national planning legislation in 2004 (Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act), local planning authorities are now required to prepare Local Development Frameworks (LDF) for their areas. The LDF is not a 'single plan' but the term for the collection of Local Development Documents produced by the local authority, which collectively delivers the spatial planning strategy for its area (taking into account economic, social and environmental issues). The Planning Service is currently producing the Core Strategy and other accompanying documents which will be part of the Leeds Local Development Framework.

2.2 In developing the LDF, consideration as to the expected level of growth over the lifetime of the plan must be made. The Planning Service relies on the annual population forecasts developed by National Statistics and the household forecasts produced by CLG every two years. This information is used to inform planning policy decisions for Leeds.

2.3 However, alongside using the most current data released, the LDF must also consider the overall plan for the region, as delivered in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). This is because the LDF must be in general conformity with the RSS. The RSS, adopted in May 2008, used the 2003 and 2004 based projections when devising the policies and spatial strategy for the region. Therefore it is important that the LDF seek a balance between meeting the vision and aims of the RSS while also considering more recent data that highlights growth at higher than initially forecasted levels. Therefore the LDF must be flexible in its approach to planning and delivering growth whilst also seeking to maintain the principles established in the RSS.

### **3.0 Future Development Patterns**

3.1 The RSS has set out a Core Approach for delivering growth. The basic elements of this approach are to ensure that development is located in sustainable locations, regenerating deprived neighbourhoods and making the best use of existing infrastructure. Due consideration must be given to green infrastructure, environment and habitats and ensuring that people have access to facilities via sustainable transportation options. This has culminated in seeking to concentrate growth in key centres across the Region.

3.2 Leeds, through its emerging LDF, has translated this approach into the emerging Core Strategy policies. Leeds has identified key settlements where growth should be located – taking in due regard considerations such as flooding, transportation, landscape classifications, etc. By concentrating growth in key settlements, it is expected that the town centres of these centres will also improve, gaining from increased population to support and providing certainty of growth. That is, the LDF has set out a vision for where growth will occur in the district over the next 20 years.

3.3 The level of growth expected to occur within Leeds requires the District to consider how best to accommodate the growth. This means that Leeds has to identify whether increased densities within the urban fabric are needed through infill opportunities, or whether extensions and even new settlements will help accommodate the growing population. At present it is expected that infill will provide for over half of the forecasted growth, but longer term a large percentage may also be required from extensions to settlements. Future work may also identify a need to greatly expand or develop a new settlement.

3.4 Attached to this report are tables on the settlements identified as being key to accommodating development as well as a table outlining how growth is expected to be accommodated (i.e. infill or extensions). All of this work continues to be subject to sound evidence as well as further public consultation.

### **4.0 Planned Level of Growth**

- 4.1 As mentioned earlier, the LDF must be ever mindful of the growing population in Leeds. Therefore it has to define a series of robust policies which will be flexible enough to accommodate growth above and beyond what is already being forecasted. Initial data suggest growth in the order of approximately 83, 000 housing units could be delivered between 2009 - 2026 on land that meets Core Strategy policies. This averages to about 4882 units per annum (gross). However this will need further investigation and is wholly depended on external factors such as need, build rates, etc.
- 4.2 However recent forecasts suggest that at a minimum, Leeds needs to be planning for approximately 4800 units (net)of housing per year. This is based on past trends and holding the average household size at its current rate. While these assumptions can be challenged both for and against, these forecasts represent the lowest level of housing growth forecasted. Therefore it is important that the LDF remain suitably flexible to ensure that throughout the lifetime of The Plan, policies will be able to be delivered ALONGSIDE housing growth.
- 4.3 To remain flexible, the LDF will use the Plan Monitor and Manage approach. This approach uses annual monitoring of key indicators to track progress on meeting the Plan's (and the community's) objectives. By looking at annual trends, policy can be managed and adjusted to ensure that any adverse implications are dealt with swiftly and that positive policy delivery can be reinforced.
- 4.4 One of the initial methods of the Plan Monitor Manage Approach being promoted in the Core Strategy is by delivering housing at an increasing rate throughout the life of the Plan. This will ensure that housing development increases alongside population increases. This is important as it provides time to ensure adequate infrastructure is developed alongside housing. It also will help to balance supply and demand issues, ensure that the development industry can grow with the population and enables new technologies to be implemented in as many developments as possible. That is, the right number of developments for the right number of people each year, built to the standards of that year. It is expected that the following trajectory will be used to deliver housing:

## Phase Housing Delivery 2009 - 2026

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Short Term Total
2750	2750	2850	2950	3100	3250	17650

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Medium Term Total
3650	4050	4550	5050	5550	22850

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Long Term Total
5550	5550	5550	5550	5550	5650	33400

4.5 In terms of future development, the number is only one part of the delivery equation. Development will also need to consider the forecasted population structure, as this will impact on what services needed. For housing, this is understanding what the population will be requiring and at what time period in the LDF. For other services, such as transportation, health and leisure, it will be about ensuring that delivery occurs in the right locations and at the right time.

### 5.0 Adjusting to Changes

5.1 It is expected that both the regional and local plans will be updated before 2026. These updates will offer opportunities to formally adjust policies to ensure that a steady and appropriate supply of housing and related infrastructure is developed to meet the needs of the Leeds population. However by examining policies and adjusting as necessary, the key aims of ensuring sustainable development in sustainable locations, building up the roles of settlements and town centres and seeking to minimise impacts on the environment will continue to play a key role. Therefore service delivery in and around those areas identified for future growth in the Core Strategy should be considered in all long range planning activities.

### 6.0 Conclusion

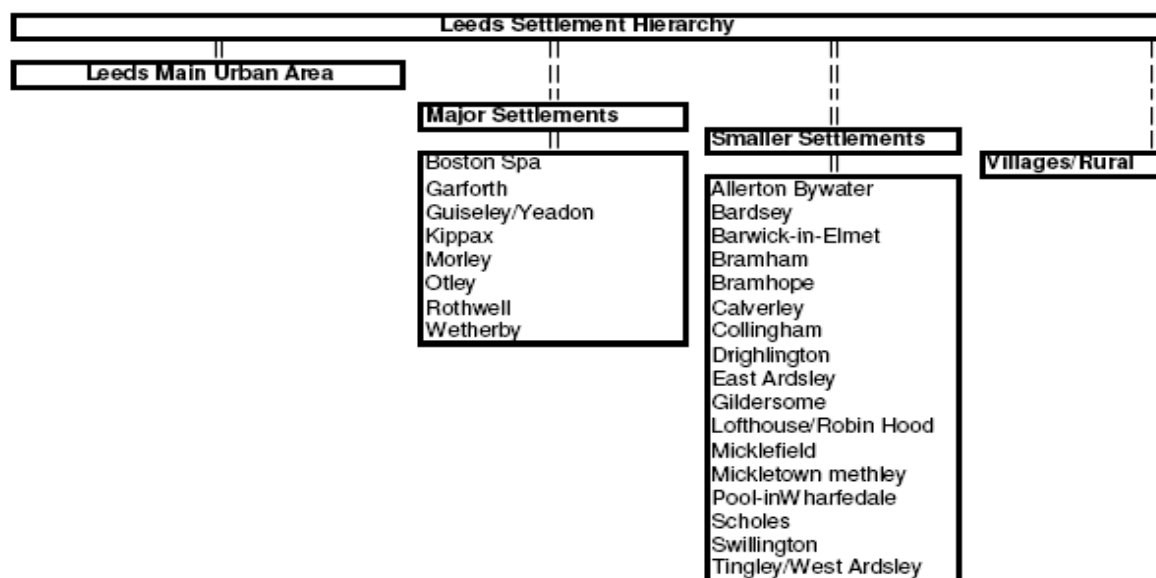
6.1 Population growth within the District is expected to continue to increase at ever higher rates. The LDF has taken on board these forecasts and is establishing a plan for development which takes into account the core approach laid out in the RSS alongside. The LDF is not just about delivering housing but about delivering all services to the people of Leeds.

6.2 Using household development at its base, the LDF has outlined where future growth is expected to occur. This has led to identifying

service centres where it is expected that services will be concentrated to ensure delivery to local residents.

6.3 The overall package of development within Leeds is expected to follow a sustainable approach, considering transportation, infrastructure levels and use of land amongst other key factors. It is in this way that Leeds will be able to respond to the growing population and be able to absorb any changes to estimates.

## Leeds Settlement Hierarchy:



## Identified Housing Supply as a Proportion of Total Requirement (%)

	2009 – 2015		2015-2020		2020-2026		Plan period	
	In Urban Area	Extension	In Urban Area	Extension	In Urban Area	Extension	In Urban Area	Extension
City Centre	3		8		10		21	
Main Urban Area (excl. City Centre)	11	2	9	5	8	9	27	15
Major Settlements	2	0	1	3	0	16	3	21
Smaller Settlements	1	0	0	1	0	11	1	12
Other Rural	0		0		0		1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>48</b>

Note: This table identifies housing supply in excess of the 73,900 housing units yet to be delivered until 2026 – hence 101% total delivery.