

Meeting of the Council – 29th November, 2010

Report of the Cabinet

Approval for the Adoption of the Black Country Joint Core Strategy

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the proposals of the Cabinet for the approval and adoption of the Black Country Joint Core Strategy. The Black Country Core Strategy website is available for Members to view at the following address:
<http://blackcountrycorestrategy.dudley.gov.uk/home>
2. To authorise the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to approve any further minor amendments to the document prior to its adoption.

Background

3. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, each Local Planning Authority is statutorily required to produce a Core Strategy as part of its Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy is to provide the strategic planning basis for all development in the Borough up to 2026 linking in with other Council Strategies and the Community Plan.
4. Following on from the completion of the Black Country Study, and encouragement from Central Government for Councils to work jointly, it was agreed that the Core Strategy be done as a joint document between the four Local Planning Authorities. This proposal was then endorsed by Dudley Council's Cabinet on 13th September, 2006 and by Council on 16th October, 2006.
5. The Joint Core Strategy provides a detailed planning strategy at the local level, building on the work carried out previously in the Black Country Study which identified that future development in the Black Country would be concentrated in a network of strategic and town centres and the corridors interlinking them. The Joint Core Strategy takes that policy approach forward and provides more detail on the quantity and kind of development that will go into each centre and corridor (for example how much new housing, how much employment land and so forth).
6. The adoption of the Core Strategy is the culmination of a required set of stages as stipulated in legislation, all of which required community involvement and consultation; with the four Authorities working closely. An 'Issues and Options' Paper was approved by the Cabinet for consultation in June 2007 followed by a 'Preferred Options' Document which was approved by the Cabinet for consultation in February 2008. The final Submission Document was prepared and sent to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government earlier this year and was then subject to an Examination in Public, which took place over two and a half weeks in July 2010.

7. During the Examination, the Planning Inspectorate, in consultation with Council Officers and other participants agreed a set of minor changes to the document. Since then the Planning Inspectorate have issued their report, endorsed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, recommending the adoption of the Black Country Core Strategy subject to further minor changes to ensure its soundness. This therefore enables the four Black Country Authorities to adopt the Strategy.
8. On consideration of the information contained in this report, the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 27th October, 2010, resolved to recommend the Council as set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 below.

Finance

9. 9. The Joint Core Strategy itself has been produced using existing budgets and resources dedicated to the production of Development Plan Documents and other such statutory planning documents.

Law

10. The production of a Core Strategy as a Development Plan Document is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
11. 11. In addition, Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, allows the Council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the economic or environmental well-being of the area.

Equality Impact

12. The Joint Core Strategy sets the planning framework for the development of the Borough, as well as the rest of the Black Country up to 2026. The Core Strategy will seek to ensure that sufficient homes, shops and employment, social, educational and recreational facilities are planned and provided for in that time to meet the needs of all communities and everyone within those communities. This will include meeting the needs of children and young people seeking to provide sufficient facilities within the Borough for them as well as having a positive effect for future generations.

Recommendations

13. That, subject to the recommendation below, the Black Country Joint Core Strategy be approved and adopted.
14. That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment, be authorised to agree any minor changes to the document prior to adoption.



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Leader of the Council