

Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

The Black Country Joint Core Strategy update

Purpose of Report

To update Members of the select committee on the progress made on the Joint Core Strategy which has now reached an advanced stage .

Background

1. 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. Members will recall receiving earlier reports on the Joint Core Strategy in the early stages of its development. It has now reached an advanced stage.
2. Following changes approved by The Secretary of State to the Regional Spatial Strategy, which included the allocation of Brierley Hill as a new Strategic Town Centre for the Borough and the approval of Dudley as a centre for Tourism and Heritage, the four Black Country Authorities have continued to work together at a more detailed level on the Joint Core Strategy. The Government have increasingly encouraged joint working between authorities in the production of such Planning Documents and this arrangement has been agreed by all four Black Country Authorities.
3. Each of the four Boroughs Cabinet and Full Council's approved the document as the basis for publication at the end of November 2009 and to progress to submission of the document to the Secretary of State in February 2010. As part of the joint working process, the four Black Country Authorities have set up a Joint Advisory Group (JAG) made up of the Cabinet Members with responsibility for Planning from each of the four Councils. The JAG meets on a regular basis to endorse the joint approach and provide a steer for the progress of the joint working arrangements. The JAG last met on the 18th February 2010 and agreed that the Joint Core Strategy could proceed to submission and that officers should make suggestion for minor changes to be made to the document taking into account consultation responses at the publication stage of the document.

4. The Joint Core Strategy will provide a more detailed planning strategy at the local level, building on the work carried out previously in the Black Country Study which was part of the first review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. For example, the Black Country Study 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 how much and what kind of development will go into each centre and corridor. (i.e. how much new housing, how much employment land and so on).
5. The document is now at a crucial and final stage, it has been submitted to the Secretary of State and an examination in public is planned for July 2010 where interested parties will be invited to discuss the issues relating to the strategy in public. The plan is scheduled to be adopted late 2010 and will then become part of the planning framework for the Borough upon which planning decisions will be based.

Finance

6. The joint Core Strategy itself has been, and will be produced using existing budgets and resources dedicated to the production of Development Plan Documents and other such statutory planning documents.

Law

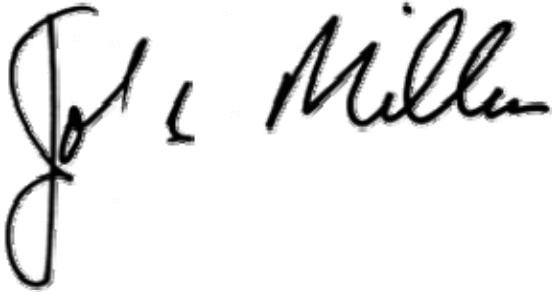
7. The production of a Core Strategy as a Development Plan Document is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
8. In addition, Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, allows the Council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the economic or environmental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

Equality Impact

9. The joint Core Strategy will set 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

10. It is recommended that the contents of this report be noted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Millar'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

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John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

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List of Background Papers

Joint Core Strategy Publication document – November 2009