

AGENDA ITEM NO 8

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REGENERATION – 1 MARCH 2005

PROGRESS ON ADOPTION OF THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PREPARATION OF TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLANS AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER ACT 2004

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF URBAN ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To inform the Committee on the progress towards adoption of the Borough Unitary Development Plan [UDP] and implications of the new planning regime and up-date on Town Centre Masterplans.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Council received a progress report on the revised deposit Unitary development Plan at its meeting on the 12th January 2005. In the next couple of months a report will be presented to the Cabinet and Full Council seeking approval to the responses to the objections received into the Proposed Modifications made with respect to the Revised Unitary Development Plan. If Members agree with the proposed responses a further Public Local Inquiry will not be required and the Council can then proceed to the next stage in the Development Plan production, and publish its notice of intention to adopt the Plan after the statutory 28 days notification period.
- 2.2. The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Order Act 2004 has introduced significant changes to the national, regional and local planning process. The UDP, upon adoption, will be considered in the context of this new regime. As background to the understanding of this context a presentation on the provisions of the Act will be made at the meeting. The Committee may wish to consider whether a more in-depth awareness session should be arranged for all Members of the Committee.
- 2.3. One of the Council's priorities is the regeneration of the four principal town centres in the Borough – Dudley, Stourbridge, Brierley Hill and Halesowen. The timing for completion and implementation of the Masterplans, which are an essential component of the regeneration process, are affected by the new planning process.
- 2.4. The Masterplan for Dudley Town Centre has been completed and has undergone full consultation. A decision will be sought from the Development Control Committee to adopt the Masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance [SPG] to the adopted UDP. This will remain as SPG for the three years during which the UDP can be "saved".

- 2.5. The Masterplan for the renaissance of Dudley Town Centre was led by urban design consultants David Lock Associates during spring 2004 and went through a public consultation process in the months of July and August of that year.
- 2.6. Of the total questionnaires which were returned more than 83% indicated they would visit the town centre more often if the proposals were implemented.
- 2.7. It is anticipated that the Masterplan will be presented to Development Control Committee by June 2005 to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Guidance, if the UDP has been adopted by this time.
- 2.8. Officers of the Council are currently working on the implementation plan which will include establishment of the Dudley Town Centre Regeneration Partnership to progress delivery of the plan. Membership of the Partnership Board will include representatives from local community groups, business groups and developers.
- 2.9. Significant progress has been made on the Stourbridge Town Centre Masterplan. David Lock Associates were appointed consultants in December 2004 to deliver the Masterplan Framework for Stourbridge Town Centre. However, in order to fit within the new Local Development Scheme [LDS] the ultimate adoption of the Masterplan as an Area Action Plan is likely to be 2008.
- 2.10. The Masterplan will be one of the first of its kind to be progressed under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Order Act 2004.
- 2.11. David Lock Associates are currently gathering land, property, transport and general data to form the basis of their work before presenting to officers for comment. It is envisaged the Masterplan for Stourbridge will be processed in two or three stages, due to the implementation process of the 2004 Act.
- 2.12. A Stourbridge Developers Forum has been established in which major land owners/key stakeholders can keep each other and Council Officers informed of their intentions and plans for their developments in and around the Town Centre.
- 2.13. Significant progress has been made towards the completion of the Brierley Hill Town Centre Masterplan. The Brierley Hill Investment & Development Framework has now been produced in draft by DTZ Piedad Consulting and was presented in January 2005 to Dudley MBC, who commissioned this work on behalf of the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership [BHRP]. Copies of the draft framework were circulated to key stakeholders directly involved in its development on the 5th January 2005 for comment and the feedback received is now being collated. A meeting to resolve outstanding issues is currently being arranged and this will enable the framework to go forward for consultation. However, in order to fit within the new Local Development Scheme [LDS] the ultimate adoption of the Masterplan as an Area Action Plan is likely to be 2008.

- 2.14. Work on the Halesowen Area Development Framework has yet to be started. Officers continue to invest time in networking with potential stakeholders in the area to gather local intelligence and apprise the Members of the key issues that will no doubt need to be addressed through the framework. Although a decision on general start and completion dates for the framework has yet to be made, it is envisaged that this preliminary period will help to assist in considering the merits of the various different mechanisms available for developing and delivering the framework in the future.
- 2.15. The start on work for the Halesowen Town Centre Masterplan was scheduled for sometime during the 2005/06 financial year. However, because of scheduling requirements under the LDS it is unlikely that this start date will now be 2008.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1. It is proposed that the Select Committee mote the contents of the report and consider whether it should receive a comprehensive presentation on the new planning regime.

4. FINANCE

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. LAW

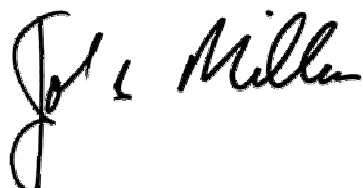
- 5.1. The Council's Constitution and the scrutiny role of the Committee are governed by Part II of the Local Government Act 2000.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1. This report complies fully with the Council's policies with regard to equal opportunities and diversity.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1. That the proposals set out in Section 3 above be approved.



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Director of Urban Environment

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