

**Agenda Item No 10**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**D2 JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**

**4 June 2019**

**PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLANNING  
FRAMEWORK FOR DERBYSHIRE**

**(1) Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the background to the Government's new approach to strategic planning and the priority it attaches to this activity.
- 1.2 It also sets out a proposal for joint working across all Derbyshire authorities to prepare a non-statutory Strategic Planning Framework for the county in response to this new approach. Support and endorsement from the D2 Joint Committee is sought to commence collaborative preparation of the proposed Framework. It should be noted that a report on the Strategic Planning Framework was presented to a meeting of the Derbyshire Chief Executives Group on 17 May 2019, at which the Group endorsed the presentation of a report to the D2 Joint Committee for consideration and endorsement.

**2.0 Decision/ discussion required by the D2 Joint Committee**

- 2.1 **The Joint Committee is required to consider the proposals set out in this report, particularly the direction of travel being set by Government to undertaking joint strategic planning work and addressing the short comings in the current 'Duty to Cooperate'.**
- 2.2 **Specifically, the Committee is requested to consider the following recommendations and agree:**
  - i) **Commencement of work to develop a non-statutory Strategic Planning Framework for Derbyshire;**
  - ii) **Discussion between Derby City and Derbyshire County Council to explore the potential for the Framework to be prepared jointly for the whole D2 area (i.e. Derbyshire, Derby City, all the Derbyshire districts and the Peak District National Park Authority);**
  - iii) **Development of an expression of interest for submission to the Government's Planning Delivery Fund to support preparation of the Strategic Planning Framework;**
  - iv) **Preparation of a detailed project plan (including governance, timescales, evidence, process and consultation arrangements) for the Framework – to be subject to further discussion and endorsement by the D2 Joint Committee; and**

- v) **The D2 Joint Committee providing the strategic oversight and governance for the development and delivery of the Strategic Planning Framework.**

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 Strategic planning and the need for local authorities to work more effectively together to prepare their development plans, particularly joint working on cross-boundary strategic planning matters, has become a high priority for Government. This priority has been set out in three recent public consultations by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG):
- The Housing White Paper published in February 2017 entitled ‘Fixing Our Broken Housing Market’;
  - Follow-up consultation published in September 2017 entitled ‘Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places’;
  - The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), culminating with the publication of the final version in July 2018.
- 3.2 The importance of the role of county councils working collaboratively on strategic planning matters, plan and policy making with all local planning authorities has been highlighted in each of these consultations.
- 3.3 Since abolition of the county structure plans in 2004, and more recently the regional plans in 2010, strategic planning has been carried out through a voluntary mechanism between upper and lower tier authorities known as the ‘Duty to Co-operate’. It is widely recognised, however, not least by the Government itself, that the Duty to Co-operate has not been effective in delivering well-coordinated strategic planning. In particular, MHCLG has emphasised that the single biggest reason why district and borough local plans have failed the ‘soundness’ test is due to the failure of local authorities to adequately collaborate in their plan making process. As a consequence, MHCLG has sought to address this failure through more formal joint working requirements set out in the NPPF.
- 3.4 There is also a recognition that strategic infrastructure priorities must have a greater role in influencing planning strategies. Further delivery of strategic infrastructure also forms a key plan of the Government’s approach to driving economic growth. This recognises that growth needs to be managed on a strategic scale.
- 3.5 There is a long and successful history of effective joint working between the D2 local planning authorities and Peak District National Park Authority on strategic plan making, including:
- Collaboration through a range of Derbyshire-wide officer working groups, such as the Planning Policy Officer Group, Heads of Development Management Officer Group, Heads of Planning Service Group, Planning Information Monitoring Officer Group and Traveller Issues Working Group (co-ordinated by Derbyshire County Council);

- Drafting of a range of Statements of Common Ground on cross boundary, strategic planning and highways matters to support district and borough local plan preparation and their associated Examinations in Public (EIPs);
- Supporting Duty to Co-operate responsibilities as part of the local plan preparation;
- County Council appearing jointly at local plan EIPs to provide evidence on key cross boundary strategic planning matters; and
- Establishing regular meetings to discuss cross-boundary strategic infrastructure provision.

3.6 The current round of local plan reviews is coming to an end, with full coverage of adopted local plan reviews across the County anticipated by 2020. Derbyshire is an area of high planned growth up to around 2033 and there is now a good understanding of the current distribution of the growth agenda that will deliver homes, economic development and key infrastructure within Derbyshire over the next 15 years.

#### **4.0 The Proposal**

- 4.1 There is now an opportunity to start thinking about the next generation of growth within the County, in particular what this will look like and the issues surrounding the distribution of infrastructure - particularly transport investment priorities. There is also an opportunity to ask fundamental questions around what Derbyshire will look like in 30 years' time and how shared issues can best be addressed.
- 4.2 The proposed Strategic Planning Framework would be non-statutory but would complement the adopted or emerging local plans of the districts. It would become a material consideration in the preparation of future local plan reviews and in the determination of planning applications, although as a non-statutory document, it would not usurp the relevant local plan.
- 4.3 The primary role of the Framework would be to set out a consensus around common key strategic objectives and priorities through an overarching spatial planning vision for the County covering the period 2020 to 2050. It would be a key tool to help manage good / green growth and provide important evidence to demonstrate that co-operation on strategic matters has been an integral part of local plan preparation; a key requirement in the local plan examination process.
- 4.4 It would be informed by existing and new evidence developed to support local plans, supplemented by other new, county-wide evidence as necessary. More importantly, it would enable authorities to respond collectively on other sub-regional and regional matters as they arise, such as proposals for HS2 and bids for funding.
- 4.5 In terms of wider benefits, the Strategic Planning Framework would deliver for all D2 authorities, including the PDNPA by:

- Providing an effective mechanism for setting out the key strategic cross-boundary planning objectives and priorities.
- Bringing together the separate growth strategies that are currently embedded in individual local plans to deliver this growth in a more coordinated and effective way.
- Integrating strategic spatial, infrastructure and economic priorities and plan for long term strategic infrastructure needs.
- Offering the opportunity for strategic coordination which would help maximise the economic growth potential of a number of emerging major development schemes.
- Providing a more joined approach to raising and using infrastructure funding.
- Providing a multi-skilled resource to develop and deliver place-based plans.

- 4.6 Housing, employment and infrastructure are obvious strategic matters for potential inclusion in Strategic Planning Framework, but others could include environment (including Green Belt), climate change mitigation (good growth/green growth) public health, minerals and waste and gypsies and travellers.
- 4.7 There has been much shared thinking and joint work over the last 12 months between senior planning officers in D2. These discussions have established strong support in principle for the preparation of a Strategic Planning Framework for Derbyshire on a non-statutory basis, using the existing Housing Market Areas as the basis for setting out priorities and objectives. Discussions with Derby City Council have also explored the principle of whether the preparation of the Strategic Planning Framework could be prepared jointly with the City Council and indications from officers are that this has clear merits and is worthy of further exploration.
- 4.8 Consultation has been undertaken with a number of external organisations including the National Strategic Planners' Network (NSPN) for advice on how to take forward a Framework of this nature, particularly based on experience of other groupings of upper and lower tier councils, which have come together in the last two or three years to prepare strategic plans for their areas.
- 4.9 Discussions have also taken place with the County Council Network (CCN) for similar advice. These have highlighted examples in a number of areas of the country where county and unitary and/or district councils have been collaborating on the preparation of statutory and non-statutory strategic plans or strategic growth strategies – many of which have received substantial financial support from Government (see Appendix 1). Advice from the Director of the National Strategic Planners' Network has emphasised that such a Framework for Derbyshire should be seen as a long-term strategy with a recommended time horizon of 2050. This would enable existing city, district and borough local plan strategic growth strategies to form the basis of the Strategic Planning Framework in the short to medium term and for the Framework to set out strategic priorities and objectives for the medium to long term up to 2050.

- 4.10 In terms of delivery, and having regard to the above context, it is anticipated the Strategic Planning Framework would be prepared collaboratively by the D2 local planning authorities and Peak District National Park Authority. Although the document would be non-statutory, it is proposed its development would follow the format of a 'formal process' to ensure meaningful consultation and engagement – e.g. stages for the publication of issues and objectives, preferred approach and publication plan - plus extensive stakeholder engagement through a series of workshops and consultation events (see further details below).
- 4.11 Subject to the endorsement by the D2 Joint Committee, a detailed project plan will be prepared and will include details of governance (see further details below), timescales, evidence, process and consultation arrangements for further discussion. The County Council is able to offer resources to lead this work. In the meantime, an outline project plan has been developed to give an indication of how the Framework could be progressed, which is set out in Appendix 2.

## **5.0 Governance**

- 5.1 Discussions with the NSPN and CCN for advice on the preparation of the Strategic Planning Framework have clearly highlighted that, based on other examples around the country, the key to successful delivery has been the establishment of clearly defined governance arrangements at an early stage.
- 5.2 It is considered the D2 Joint Committee would be an appropriate body to provide strategic oversight and leadership of the work, and in particular, sign off responsibilities for key stages in preparation of the Framework. Officer task and finish groups would be established as appropriate to ensure delivery of the more day-to-day activity in development of the Framework.
- 5.3 Should the Joint Committee accept the recommendation below, Terms of Reference will be developed and circulated for agreement by the Committee.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Committee is requested to consider the following recommendations and agree:
- i) Commencement of work to develop a non-statutory Strategic Planning Framework for Derbyshire;
  - ii) Discussion between Derby City and Derbyshire County Council to explore the potential for the Framework to be prepared jointly for the whole D2 area (i.e. Derbyshire, Derby City, all the Derbyshire districts and the Peak District National Park Authority);
  - iii) Development of an expression of interest for submission to the Government's Planning Delivery Fund to support preparation of the Strategic Planning Framework;

- iv) Preparation of a detailed project plan (including governance, timescales, evidence, process and consultation arrangements) for the Framework – to be subject to further discussion and endorsement by the D2 Joint Committee; and
- v) The D2 Joint Committee providing the strategic oversight and governance for the development and delivery of the Strategic Planning Framework.



# Appendix 1: Statutory and Non-Statutory Strategic Plans Being Prepared by Upper and Lower Tier Authorities in England

## Strategic planning 2019

### Statutory Joint Strategic Plans (Statutory)

1. Greater Exeter Strategic Plan\*
2. Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Spatial Plan\*
3. South Essex Joint Strategic Plan\*
4. South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan\*
5. West of England Joint Spatial Plan\*

### Spatial Development Strategies (Statutory)\*\*

6. Greater Manchester Spatial Framework\*
7. Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy\*
8. The London Plan

### Statutory Joint LPs and Joint/Aligned Strategies

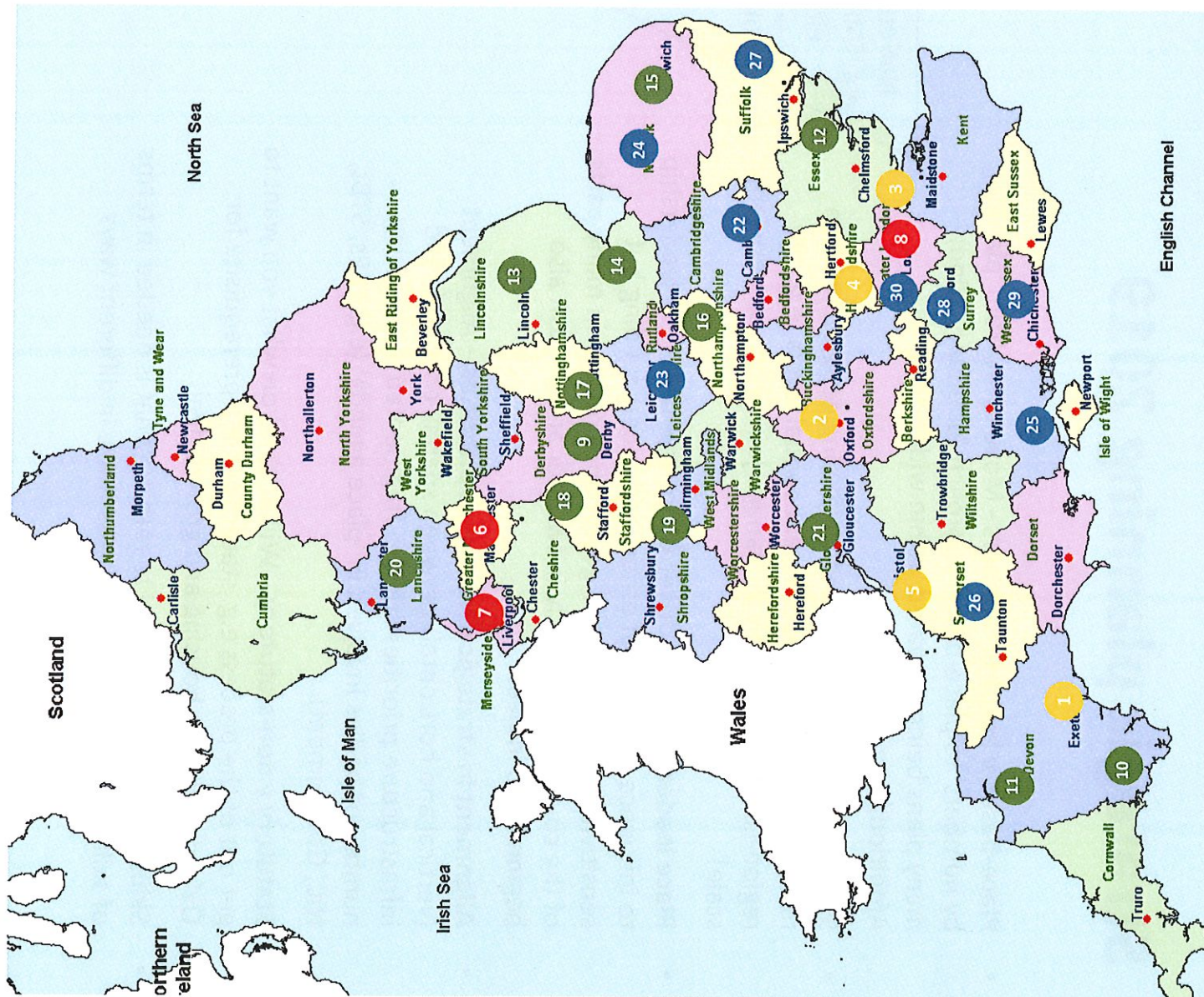
9. Greater Derby Aligned Core Strategies
10. Plymouth and SW Devon Joint Local Plan\*
11. North Devon & Torridge Joint Local Plan\*
12. North Essex Aligned Strategies\*
13. Central Lincolnshire Joint Local Plan
14. South East Lincolnshire Joint Local Plan
15. Greater Norwich Joint Local Plan
16. North Northants Joint Core Strategy
17. Greater Nottingham Aligned Core Strategies
18. Newcastle Upon Tyne & Stoke Joint Local Plan\*
19. Black Country Joint Core Strategy
20. Central Lancashire Joint Local Plan\*
21. Gloucester, Tewksbury & Cheltenham Joint Core Strategy

### Non-Statutory Strategic planning and/or Growth Frameworks

22. Cambridge & Peterborough CA Spatial Framework\*
23. Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan
24. Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework
25. PUSH Spatial Position Statement
26. Somerset Growth Plan
27. Suffolk Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Framework
28. Surrey Local Strategic Statement (Interim)
29. West Sussex & Greater Brighton Local Strategic Statement
30. Heathrow Strategic Planning Framework\*

\*Emerging plans/ frameworks




\*\* subject to their own defined legislation & Regulations i.e. not development plan documents



## Appendix 2: Indicative Project Plan: Derbyshire Strategic Framework

[illegible]

\* subject to discussions with Districts on sign off requirements/delegation

 Key milestones  
 meetings  
 consultation