



Council
27 January 2014

Subject: Update on the way forward for Planning Policy in Central Lincolnshire since the Core Strategy was withdrawn.

Report by:	Mark Sturgess
Contact Officer:	Suzanne Fysh
Purpose / Summary:	The Leader of the Council requested a report outlining the way forward for planning policy in Central Lincolnshire since the withdrawal of the Central Lincolnshire Core Strategy

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1) That members note the information provided in this report.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The four councils involved in the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (WLDC, NKDC, CoLC, LCC) signed up to a Statutory Instrument enacted by Parliament in 2010 to jointly produce planning policy documents (Core Strategy or Local Plan) for Central Lincolnshire. This created a separate “Local Planning Authority” in Central Lincolnshire to produce a Local Plan.

Financial : The councils pool funding for a Central Lincolnshire team to carry out the day to day work of developing policies. Finance officers have been involved in the budgets of the joint team. It costs approximately £500k per annum to produce a Local Plan and keep it under review. We contribute a proportion of that overall cost to work jointly with the Central Lincolnshire authorities.

Staffing : A recent re-structure (Sept-Dec 2013) of the joint planning unit has taken place which has reduced the team from 14 to 7. A further responsibility has been placed on the Heads of Planning of each authority to ensure delivery of a Local Plan. There is an added requirement for each authority to provide other officer support from within a range of specialisms to also ensure a more joined up approach to delivery of a local plan eg Economic Development, Strategic Housing, Planning

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : A new approach is required to community engagement to ensure that all those who want to engage can do so. This is currently being project planned.

Risk Assessment : Risk Assessments are now an integral part of the project planning process and are being developed and updated weekly.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : The Local Plan will deal with the planning implications of climate change.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Minutes of meetings of the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee
Withdrawn Core Strategy
<http://www.central-lincs.org.uk>

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1. The Latest Position

- 1.1 The Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee met on Monday 6 January 2014.
- 1.2 The Committee resolved to withdraw the Core Strategy, thereby formalising the outcome of the Pre-Hearing meeting held by the Planning Inspector on 12 December 2013.
- 1.3 The Committee also resolved to produce a Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire by the end of 2016. The Local Plan will ensure that core policies, development management policies, strategic allocations and local allocations for housing and employment sites are brought together in one document. It will be a replacement for our 2006 Local Plan which has an end date of 2016.
- 1.4 In resolving to produce a Local Plan the Committee emphasised a number of key points:
 - a. The process for developing a Local Plan will include extensive consultation and engagement with all members of the four partner councils and with parish and town councils. It is accepted that some of the consultation which took place in the summer of 2013 could have been done better and this will be addressed through the new process.
 - b. The Local Plan will enable an integrated approach to the provision of new housing, jobs and infrastructure across central Lincolnshire where many of these issues are interdependent. This should lead to more sustainable communities with the homes, jobs and facilities they need.
- 1.5 There was unanimous support from the Committee for a joined up Local Plan, recognising that this represents the best way to plan for Central Lincolnshire, and the most efficient and cost effective approach to plan preparation.
- 1.6 It was also recognised by the Committee that the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee has a statutory basis through a statutory instrument and that the “duty to co-operate” (introduced by the Localism Act 2011) requires neighbouring local authorities to work together effectively to address planning issues.

2. Next Steps

- 2.1 Detailed project plans and strategies for engaging communities will be prepared over the coming weeks to give assurance to both senior officers and members that a sound local plan can be produced by the end of 2016.

- 2.2 It is anticipated that we will involve all the members of the partner councils in a workshop session, probably in March to provide an opportunity for all members to engage with the process of producing a Local Plan.
- 2.3 A report on the programme to produce the Local Plan will be brought to the Prosperous Communities Committee for consideration at its March 2014 meeting.