

**Report to** Sustainable development panel

**Item**

13 September 2017

**Report of** Director of regeneration and development

**Subject** Norfolk Strategic Framework Consultation

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### **Purpose**

To consider the consultation draft of the emerging Norfolk Strategic Framework. A further iteration of the Framework will be reported back to the Panel in due course in advance of it being considered for adoption by Cabinet.

### **Recommendation**

To comment on the emerging framework to inform discussion at future meetings of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority to provide a prosperous and vibrant city.

### **Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**Ward/s:** All

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Stonard – Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

### **Contact officers**

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### **Background documents**

None.

# Report

## Introduction

1. When preparing Local Plans the authority is subject to a number of legal and regulatory requirements. Amongst these the council must discharge a legal duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities in relation to strategically important land use issues which cross administrative boundaries. The result of such co-operation is expected to be better planning outcomes.
2. The Norfolk Authorities have a strong track record of working together with perhaps the best example being the preparation of a single local plan to cover Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk planning authority areas. In 2015 a formal county wide Strategic Planning Member forum was established with terms of reference to ensure that the duty to co-operate was effectively discharged. These can be seen at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/partnerships/norfolk-strategic-planning-member-forum>.
3. All authorities in Norfolk including the county council participate in the forum which is supported via an officer team drawn for the councils. The forum sought and gained agreement from each of the partner authorities to prepare a framework document.
4. A first draft of the framework has now been published for an eight week period of public consultation following which it will be amended and offered to each authority for formal agreement. The consultation document is available here <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/norfolk-strategic-framework/>.

## The Norfolk Strategic Framework (NSF)

5. The Norfolk Strategic Framework is not a policy document and if it is approved it will not comprise part of the development plan. As such it does not include planning policies or proposals, rather it is intended to document areas of agreement that the Norfolk Planning Authorities have reached and which they will be following when they prepare their individual Local Plans. It has been prepared by an officer team drawn from all of the Norfolk Authorities supported by others from organisations such as the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the LEPs. The document includes:
  - (a) A high level vision for the future development of the county over the next 20-30 years.
  - (b) Four topic based high level objectives covering the economy, housing, the environment, and infrastructure.
  - (c) Around 20 separate draft agreements that each council is being asked to sign up to.
6. In addition the document describes the spatial characteristics of the county drawing on a range of previously published, and specifically prepared, evidence.

## The Agreements

7. The document asks that each authority in the country signs up to a number of agreements. These are intended to ensure that the planning authorities work closely together where it is desirable to do so but not to be so prescriptive that they would

limit the local production of development plan documents. In summary the agreements are:

**Agreements 1-3** – That the Norfolk planning authorities will plan to a common plan period extending to at least 2036 and in producing Local Plans they will seek to contribute towards the shared vision and objectives as outlined in the Framework.

**Agreement 4.** - That the Norfolk Authorities agree to prepare and maintain a consistent evidence base in relation to housing needs in three separate housing market areas. This will include the joint commissioning of Strategic Housing Market Assessments when updates are required.

**Agreements 5,6 and 7** – That outside of the greater Norwich Authorities (Norwich City, South Norfolk, and Broadland) each planning authority will continue to prepare separate local plans unless the evidence suggests that joint Local Plan production is justified.

**Agreement 8** – That the focus for economic investment in the county will be what are called the 'Tier One' Employment sites.

**Agreement 9-** That Local Plans will be prepared having regard to cross boundary infrastructure issues.

**Agreements 10 -17** – That each local plan will aim to address all housing needs (OAN) **plus a buffer of 10%**; that housing need in the Broads will be addressed by the adjacent authorities if the Broads Plan does not meet need; that Norwich, South Norfolk and Broadland will address the housing requirement arising from the City Deal within their areas (this results in the setting of higher housing targets, dealt with via a buffer, to ensure that the aspirational jobs growth targets included in the City Deal are matched with sufficient homes to accommodate workers); each authority will quantify and plan for the delivery of specialist types of accommodation for gypsies, students and the elderly together with the identified need for affordable homes; that housing capacity will be assessed using a common methodology; and finally further measures will be taken to improve delivery rates of new housing development.

**Agreement 18** – That the Authorities endorse the Planning for Health Protocol which establishes processes for more joined up working between health and planning when preparing plans and determining planning applications.

**Agreement 19** –That the planning authorities will work together to produce a County wide Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy.

**Agreement 20-** That the authorities will work together to developed a combined approach to the roll out of the supporting infrastructure for 5G mobile technology.