

Report to Cabinet

Item

07 February 2018

Report of Director of regeneration and development

10

Subject Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

Purpose

To consider the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (the Framework) which has been amended in the light of consultation responses and other publications and whether to agree it.

Recommendations

To agree to the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a prosperous and vibrant city, and a healthy city with good housing.

Financial implications

The city council's share of costs of undertaking the preparation and review of the NSPF will be from the Local Plan budget.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard - sustainable and inclusive growth

Contact officers

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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. The city council's cabinet resolved to agree to co-operate on strategic planning matters through the preparation of a shared non-statutory strategic framework in March 2015.

The Process of Preparation of the Framework

4. Following the agreement to prepare the shared non-statutory strategic framework the authorities agreed to the appointment of project management resource to co-ordinate joint planning activity. This resource, which is hosted at the city council, commenced work in late 2015 and throughout 2016 co-ordinated the work of four separate task groups which drew together evidence on economy; housing; infrastructure and the environment and delivery matters on which the framework was to be based.
5. This process led to the joint member forum considering first drafts of vision and objectives in October 2016 to guide the subsequent drafting of the document. This led to a draft of the Framework being agreed by the forum for consultation in July 2017.
6. The consultation ran from the 2 August to the 22 September. Just under 100 responses were received with the vast majority being supportive of the idea of producing the Framework and collaborative working between authorities. The responses were from a wide range of interested parties including town/parish councils, residents, community groups, local authorities, public bodies, developers, businesses and agents.
7. An extensive review of the comments received was undertaken following the close of the consultation. All comments received have been individually reviewed, answered and any changes made to the Framework as a result have been logged. The comments made, responses to them and changes resulting from them are available to inspect on the Forum's website.

8. In addition to changes arising from the consultation response significant changes were made to the emerging Framework as a result of other matters. Most notably in the light of the government consultation 'Planning for the right homes in the right places', the New Anglia LEP Economic Strategy and Norfolk County Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
9. Key changes made to the emerging Framework following the close of consultation include:
 - (a) The water section includes two proposed new agreements around water efficiency and future collaboration between the water authorities and LPAs;
 - (b) A new agreement has been added to the conclusion section highlighting the on-going support for joint working;
 - (c) A recognition of the desirability of having a transport agreement in future versions of the Framework;
 - (d) Change to the housing section of the Plan to refer to the implications of the government's proposed standard methodology for calculating objectively assessed need for housing and to change commitments to deliver a buffer above the need identified. However, it should be noted that the housing agreements in the framework only apply insofar as they relate to the local authorities own assessment of housing need and will need to be reconsidered if a new methodology is imposed by government; and
 - (e) Retitling of the document so it is referred to as the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework and is described as an emerging Statement of Common Ground to reflect an anticipated government requirement in the forthcoming review of the National Planning Policy Framework.
10. The Member Forum met of 14 December and agreed to recommend the amended version of the Framework to constituent councils for endorsement. This version can be seen at <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/norfolk-strategic-framework/results/20171220-norfolk-strategic-framework-final.pdf>

Member Scrutiny of the emerging Framework

11. Since endorsement or the preparation of the Framework member scrutiny of the process has been provided by the sustainable development panel and the portfolio holder for sustainable and inclusive growth who represents the City Council on the joint member forum.
12. Sustainable development panel considered the emerging draft Framework at its meeting of 13 September 2017 and again at its meeting of 17 January 2018. At the January meeting the panel resolved to recommend that Cabinet agree to the final Framework.

The Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

13. The Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework is not a policy document and if the recommendation is agreed 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) 23 separate agreements that each council is being asked to sign up to.

14. In addition the document describes the spatial characteristics of the county drawing on a range of previously published, and specifically prepared, evidence.
15. With regard to the 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 the Broads Authority and all other planning authorities outside of the greater Norwich Authorities (Norwich City, South Norfolk, and Broadland) will continue to prepare separate local plans unless the evidence suggests that joint Local Plan production is justified. The Greater Norwich Local Plan will be produced by the other three authorities.

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 various cross boundary infrastructure issues.

Agreements 10 -16 – That each local plan will aim to address all housing needs (OAN); 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.

Agreements 17-18 – That the Authorities will seek to pursue high water efficiency standards and liaise closely with the water companies.

Agreement 19 – To produce guidance to help the roll out of 5G telecommunications infrastructure.

Agreement 20 – 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 21 – That the Authorities will work closely with the Council to ensure a supply and funding of school places.

Agreement 22 – That the planning authorities will work together to produce a County wide Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy.

Agreement 23 – That the planning authorities and other signatories to the Framework will continue to support and resource joint planning activity.

Comment

16. Whilst in a number of sections the Framework may not be fully developed or as ambitious as the city council would ordinarily seek it should be remembered that it is joint exercise on which consensus must be reached in order for the Framework to be capable of endorsement by a wide range of organisations.
17. It should also be noted that following the housing white paper and the consultation on planning for the right homes in the right places this is an area where government policy is moving quickly and it is expected that the Framework will need to be reviewed over the next year, either in its current or amended form.
18. Nevertheless formal agreement to the Framework represents an important step in demonstrating compliance with the duty to co-operate and preparing the ground for the Council to adopt sound Local Plans in due course.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Committee: | Cabinet |
| Committee date: | 7 February 2018 |
| Director / Head of service | Graham Nelson |
| Report subject: | Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework |
| Date assessed: | 22 January 2018 |
| Description: | To seek agreement to the Framework |

| | Impact | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate) | Neutral | Positive | Negative | Comments |
| Finance (value for money) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The framework sets out a number of agreement between local authorities and other key stakeholders. In formally documenting these early in the plan preparation this reduces the risk of failure of local plans to comply with the duty to co-operate and reduces the likely scale of opposition to emerging plans from key stakeholders. |
| Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| ICT services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Economic development | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reducing risks to Local Plans should reduce uncertainty to the nature of development acceptable in the City thus reducing the risks to development brought forward in accordance with the development plan. |
| Financial inclusion | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | | |
| Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate) | Neutral | Positive | Negative | Comments |
| Safeguarding children and adults | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| <u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | Impact | | | |
| Human Rights Act 1998 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Health and well being | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Among other matters the Framework contains provision to sign up to a protocol for joint working with health providers in relation to new development |
| | | | | |
| Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate) | Neutral | Positive | Negative | Comments |
| Relations between groups (cohesion) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Among other matters the Framework contains provision for joint working across local authorities on a number of matters including accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers |
| Eliminating discrimination & harassment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Advancing equality of opportunity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | | |
| Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate) | Neutral | Positive | Negative | Comments |
| Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Framework contains a specific agreement in relation to transport. |
| Natural and built environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Framework contains a number of agreements designed to protect the natural and built environment. |
| Waste minimisation & resource use | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | Impact | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Pollution | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Sustainable procurement | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Energy and climate change | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Addressed in both a number of agreements and the objectives for the Framework. |
| | | | | |
| (Please add an 'x' as appropriate) | Neutral | Positive | Negative | Comments |
| Risk management | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Effective cooperation on Local Plan making is required by government. Without such cooperation, the risks of a future Local Plan failing to reach examination are substantial. Such a failure would have significant financial and reputational consequences |

| Recommendations from impact assessment | |
|--|--|
| Positive | |
| N/A | |
| Negative | |
| N/A | |
| Neutral | |

N/A

Issues

Agreement to the Framework is likely to aid the process of preparation of Local Plan. In practice because of the stage that has been reached in the preparation of the Framework there is no opportunity to address any omissions at this stage, although as the report notes the Framework will be subject to review in 2018.