

Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee Date: 22 October 2010 Agenda Item No. 5	
AUTHOR	Lachlan Robertson: Interim Head of the Joint Technical Unit
SUBJECT	Local Development Framework: Completion of Local Development Document processes.
PURPOSES	To seek delegated authority for the Head of the Joint Technical Unit (JTU) to progress local development documents in accordance with the provisions described in the report.
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the Joint Committee approve the above delegation.
REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS	This will allow an efficient progression of the forward planning processes in accordance with a challenging timetable with consequential savings of costs and of Member time.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Joint Committee was formally constituted on 13 June 2007 as the local planning authority for Luton and South Bedfordshire for all forward planning purposes other than Minerals and Waste. On unitary reorganisation provision was made in the Regulations to maintain the Joint Committee until 31 March 2012. That provision was made expressly to allow sufficient time for the submission and adoption of the Core Strategy and any other key Development Plan Documents.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that progress with the Core Strategy has been much slower than expected due, in no small measure, to the practical difficulties in accommodating the number of homes allocated to the area in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). However with the abolition of RSS targets we have been able to set our housing numbers and the Joint Committee endorsed the draft of the revised Joint Core Strategy for pre-submission purposes at the last meeting on 23 July 2010. Swifter progress can now be made.
- 1.3 The present intention is to submit the Joint Core Strategy to the Secretary of State by March 2011. The Planning Inspectorate will then hold an Examination in Public before making its report and final recommendation as to the soundness of the document. Assuming no further delays we are on track to secure the formal adoption of this document by the Joint Committee prior to the end of 2011.

2 MAIN ITEM

- 2.1 The Joint Committee, which exercises full local planning policy powers in relation to the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for its Designated Area, does not presently have a Scheme of Delegation to Officers. This has led to a lack of clarity as to which particular areas of work need to be formally considered and approved. It is suggested therefore that the introduction of the relatively straightforward provisions set out in the table below would provide the certainty needed by the JTU to improve efficiency and speed up the production of Local Development Documents.
- 2.2 Members will be aware of the need to minimise costs in the present fiscal situation and the measures suggested below will reduce the need for meetings with consequent savings in terms of document production, circulation, general administration and member time.

Table 1: Delegation Scheme

Delegation to Head of JTU	Subject	Authorised Person
<p>To prepare and publish the Joint Core Strategy for the purposes of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008</p> <p>To compile the representations made and to make any minor changes arising thereof.</p> <p>To submit the Core Strategy formally to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>To vary the Core Strategy in the light of minor changes proposed by the Authorised person or by the appointed Inspector in the period before, during and after the formal Examination of the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>Core Strategy Preparation, Receipt of Representations, Submission and Examination</p> <p>(Note: Nothing in this Delegation Scheme shall include the decision to formally adopt the Core Strategy or any other Development Plan Document)</p> <p>(Note: "Minor" changes are those that do not go to the heart of the policies or allocations within the document)</p>	<p>The Head of the Joint Technical Unit in consultation with the Chair and Vice- Chair of the Joint Committee.</p>

Delegation to Head of JTU	Subject	Authorised Person
Preparation and approval of any other LDF related documents (including any supporting evidence for the purpose of public consultation or use) and the variation of such documents in the light of the public responses to consultation and/or further technical advice.	LDF documents generally, including relevant technical papers/documents e.g. Sustainability Appraisal and the Statement of Community Involvement)	The Head of the Joint Technical Unit in consultation with the Chair and Vice- Chair of the Joint Committee.
Preparation and approval of draft Supplementary Planning Documents	This includes planning and development briefs for the purposes of public consultation	The Head of the Joint Technical Unit in consultation with the Chair and Vice- Chair of the Joint Committee.
Preparation and monitoring of the Local Development Scheme (LDS)	Submission of the LDS to the Secretary of State including any revision and resubmission where required	The Head of the Joint Technical Unit in consultation with the Chair and Vice- Chair of the Joint Committee.
Preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	Submission of the AMR to the Secretary of State by 31 December	The Head of the Joint Technical Unit in consultation with the Chair and Vice- Chair of the Joint Committee.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The operation of the delegation scheme will allow for the progressing of the LDF as a cost and time efficient process.

4 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Delegation schemes are a normal procedural device operated by local Councils for the efficient conduct of Council business. This places the Joint Committee in a similar position.

5 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications as all processes will still be subject to normal equalities impacts assessments.