

**ABERDEEN CITY & SHIRE  
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY**

**Date: 26 June 2014**

**Title: Scottish Government SDP Review**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) on the Scottish Government's 'Review of Strategic Development Plans in Scotland'.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 With the submission of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan to Scottish Ministers for examination last summer, the Scottish Government announced that it would start a review of the first round of Strategic Development Plans to determine the extent to which they met Scottish Government aspirations.
- 2.2 The December 2013 SDPA Bulletin highlighted the start of the review and the methods being employed by the consultants carrying out the work for the Scottish Government.
- 2.3 An online survey was used to gain views from a range of national and local stakeholders for each of the four SDPAs and this was followed up with interviews and a workshop in each area.

**3 Discussion**

- 3.1 The Scottish Government published the consultant's report on the review in May 2014. The Executive Summary is attached at Appendix 1, while the full report (122pp) is available online (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00448818.pdf>). A response from the Scottish Government is anticipated prior to the June meeting of the SDPA.
- 3.2 The report, prepared by Kevin Murray Associates and the University of Glasgow, makes a series of findings rather than recommendations and these are structured around six main themes:
- 1) Collaborative Leadership and Governance;
  - 2) Effective Engagement and Scrutiny;
  - 3) Housing and Community Building;
  - 4) Transport and Infrastructure Role;
  - 5) The influence on Delivery; and
  - 6) Resourcing and Skills.
- 3.3 The review report concluded that the future of Scotland depends largely on meeting common opportunities and challenges, which can only be achieved by a strategic approach to development planning. The economic, social and environmental interdependencies between cities and their developed and rural

hinterlands is seen as critical, with strategic planning identified as key to housing and transport delivery.

- 3.4 The system of strategic planning introduced by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 (of four Strategic Development Plans prepared by four SDPAs) is seen as still bedding in, not 'broken' but not yet fully optimised either.
- 3.5 The findings of the report are built on seeking to optimise the system from the top in terms of Ministerial advocacy, greater integration across policy areas at a national and strategic scale, greater strategic leadership provided by SDPs as well as greater awareness of the role of strategic planning among communities, stakeholders, councillors and the wider planning profession.
- 3.6 The findings of the report do not necessarily present a coherent vision for the future, but do provide a range of areas where action may be required to improve the operation of the current strategic planning arrangements.

#### Next Steps

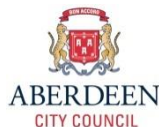
- 3.7 It is anticipated that Scottish Ministers will outline their response to the findings of the report on 23 June 2014 in parallel with the publication of National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).
- 3.8 It is therefore proposed that the SDPA considers its own response to the findings at its September meeting once the views of Scottish Ministers have been made clear. This will avoid having to consider the review in detail twice.

## **4 Recommendations**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the SDPA note the publication of the 'Review of Strategic Development Plans in Scotland' and agree to consider the findings in more detail once the response of the Scottish Government is clear.

David Jennings, Strategic Development Plan Manager, Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA

Dr Margaret Bochel  
Head of Planning & Sustainable Development  
Aberdeen City Council



Robert Gray  
Head of Planning and Building Standards  
Aberdeenshire Council



Report prepared by:-  
David Jennings, SDP Manager