

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee: 23 May 2008

Structure Plan Progress Report

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members of progress on the new structure plan and, in particular, the implementation of the development plan scheme published to support the plan preparation process.

2 Background

- 2.1 The development plan scheme consists of two parts, a project plan, and a participation statement. Comparison of progress against the development plan scheme allows the Committee to monitor progress on the production of the new structure plan, and to ensure that commitments to public and other stakeholder engagement are honoured.

3 Progress since 28 January 2008

- 3.1 A detailed assessment of progress against the commitments given in the development plan scheme is provided in appendices 1 and 2.

Review of the Development Plan Scheme

- 3.2 The current development plan scheme (DPS) was published to coincide with the start of formal work on the structure plan on 23 February 2007. Although not a statutory requirement until the new development plan regime is implemented in late 2008, it evidences our commitment to openness, transparency and the culture and procedural changes required by planning modernisation.
- 3.3 The January 2008 meeting of this Committee identified the need to review and republish the DPS due both to the period of one year since it was first published and the amended timetable for plan preparation agreed at the meeting in September 2007. The review has provided an opportunity to:
- Review the experience of implementing the DPS over the first year;
 - Update the timetable to recognise the extension to the project agreed at the September 2007 meeting of this Committee;
 - Update the project plan to recognise the implications of the proposed transitional arrangements (The [draft] Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 (Development Planning) (Saving and Transitional Provisions) Order – Art. 3) which will require the finalised plan to undergo an ‘examination’ under s12 of the 2006 Act and be approved under s13 (without consultation on proposed modifications) by Scottish Ministers; and
 - Bring the DPS into line with the draft regulations published for consultation in December 2007 (The [draft] Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan and Local Development Plan) (Scotland) Regulations - Reg. 24).

- 3.4 A revised version has now been prepared and it is proposed to publish this once a crystal mark from the Plain English Campaign has been achieved which will require some textual changes. The revised version will be presented to the next meeting of the Committee for agreement prior to publication.

Joint Council Seminar

- 3.5.1 A joint seminar of Councillors from both Councils was held on 20 March 2008. The seminar provided an opportunity for an extensive question and answer session after which six groups were formed to look at different aspects of the plan in more detail. The event was well attended and provided useful feedback which has been taken into account in the draft plan.

Press Conference

- 3.6 A press conference was held at the Beach Ballroom on 2 April 2008 by the joint chairs to coincide with the publication of the 'Provisional Draft Structure Plan' for consultation with both Councils. Local newspapers, radio and television news picked up on the story, giving the publication a favourable reception.

Consideration by both Councils of the Provisional Draft Structure Plan

- 3.7 The Provisional Draft Structure Plan has been considered by eight committees of the two Councils since early April - Marr AC (8 April), Banff & Buchan AC (8 April), Garioch AC (15 April), Buchan AC (15 April), Kincardine & Mearns AC (22 April), Formartine AC (22 April), Aberdeenshire Infrastructure Services Committee (8 May) and Aberdeen City Policy & Strategy Committee (29 April). A generally positive reception was given to the provisional draft with detailed comments considered elsewhere on this agenda.

Website

- 3.8 A website is being developed to facilitate the availability of information and consultation on the draft structure plan. It will also form the core of a website for the soon to be established Strategic Development Planning Authority (see separate report on this agenda) which will clearly outline the role of the authority and its ongoing work. The website is scheduled to go live in June, either in advance of or to coincide with the start of consultation on the draft structure plan.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 The focus of work over the next few months will be on completing the Plain English edit of the draft structure plan, getting the document graphic designed, printed and published to commence consultation prior to the start of the holiday period at the end of June. Getting the website live and organising and running consultation events will also be an important focus. More details of the proposed consultation arrangements will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.
- 4.2 The DPS will also be republished once amendments required to secure a crystal mark have been made.
- 4.3 A briefing for MEPs, MPs and MSPs is scheduled for late May 2008 to enable them to have an understanding of the draft plan prior to formal consultation commencing.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee note that work on the structure plan is proceeding in accordance with the programme set out in the development plan scheme, although the timescale has been put back as a consequence of the decisions made at the September 2007 meeting of this committee and the timing of relevant Committees of the two Councils.**

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Development Plan Scheme (Detailed timetable for producing the plan) – Update (January 2008)

Stage	Part of the plan	Start date	Comments	Update
<p>Consult people and organisations about issues that may affect the plan.</p> <p>Choose the spatial strategy, based on a number of strategic options.</p>	<p>Publish a notice of intent and press advert, a development plan scheme, an issues report, a report of survey and a 'Getting involved' leaflet. Have the website ready for people to use.</p>	<p>23 February 2007</p>	<p>We will do this after the Infrastructure Services Committee of Aberdeenshire Council (ISC) meet on 25 January 2007 and the Policy and Strategy Committee of Aberdeen City Council (P&S) meet on 13 February 2007 to approve a recommendation the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee (ACSSPC) are expected to make on 12 January 2007.</p>	<p>Both Councils approved the recommendations made by ACSSPC. A 'Notice of intent' was published on 23 February as planned with the relevant documents (all available on the website).</p>
<p>Decide what issues the strategic environmental assessment will cover.</p>	<p>Over six weeks, consult the public on our issues report.</p>	<p>26 February 2007</p>	<p>You can get consultation documents from both councils, all libraries, The Point, area offices in Aberdeenshire, and the internet.</p>	<p>Consultation commenced on 23 February for a period of 6 weeks. 91 responses were received, generating 1004 individual comments.</p>

Stage	Part of the plan	Start date	Comments	Update
<i>cont.</i>	Policy and Strategy Committee of Aberdeen City Council (P&S) and area committees of Aberdeenshire Council consider the strategic options available.	12 June 2007 July 2007		Aberdeenshire Area committees considered the strategic options at workshops held between June and late July. Aberdeen City held a seminar of chief officers and members on 14 August 2007.
	Publish responses to the issues report.	June 2007	We will do this after ACSSPC meet in June 2007 to consider responses to the issues report.	A schedule of all comments made and our response was published on the Structure Plan Website on 24 July.
	Publish the spatial strategy we prefer and our reasons for choosing it.	September 2007	We will do this after ACSSPC meet in September 2007.	The provisional strategy agreed at the meeting was advertised and published on the structure plan website, along with the relevant assessments.

Stage	Part of the plan	Start date	Comments	Update
Develop the draft plan and strategic environmental assessment to go with it.	Policy and Strategy Committee of Aberdeen City Council (P&S) and Infrastructure Services Committee of Aberdeenshire Council (ISC) consider the draft structure plan.	4 December 2007 December 2007	When developing the draft structure plan we will take into account the responses to the issues report and the spatial strategy. We will consult P&S and ISC about what should be included in the plan.	A provisional draft structure plan was considered by Policy & Strategy on 29 April 2008 and by Infrastructure Services on 8 May 2008. The six Area Committees of Aberdeenshire Council also considered the provisional draft. Comments were made and these have fed into the preparation of the draft structure plan.
	ACSSPC agree on the draft structure plan.	December 2007	ACSSPC will agree a draft plan for publishing and consulting on.	A draft structure plan is reported elsewhere on this agenda. The timing is a consequence of the decision taken in September 2007 to build more time into the process and the timing of relevant Committees.

Note: The shaded text is an extract from Appendix 1 of the 'Development plan scheme' published on 23 February 2007.

Development Plan Scheme (Details of consultations we plan to carry out) – Update (June 2007)

Consultation stage	Timescale	Who we will consult	What we will consult them about	How we will consult them	Comment	Update
Issues report	February 2007 to March 2007	General public Community Groups Private Sector Public Sector	Written responses to the issues report	Place an advert in the local newspaper to tell people about the opportunity to take part in developing the structure plan. Publish a leaflet about getting involved, an issues report and a draft report of survey. Put in place a strategy for dealing with the press.	We will automatically invite all the organisations listed in appendices 3 to 6 to comment. We will assess all the comments we receive and provide feedback to the people who gave those comments. We will place their names in a database so we can easily contact them again about other formal consultations we carry out.	Feedback on the outcomes of the consultation has been provided to all those who gave comments.

Consultation stage	Timescale	Who we will consult	What we will consult them about	How we will consult them	Comment	Update
Strategic options	February 2007 to May 2007	Community Groups Private Sector Public Sector	Assessing the spatial strategies	Workshops	We will encourage people to respond in writing to the issues report.	31 workshops were held across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Analysis of the outcomes of these workshops has been undertaken and published.
	June 2007 to November 2007	Private Sector Public Sector	Detailed consultation on the spatial strategy with transport, water and other service providers, and the main people and organisations with an interest in development.	Meetings and collecting written responses.	We will focus on how we should put in place the spatial strategy.	A report on the technical appraisal of the possible spatial strategies has been produced and published. An additional opportunity to comment on the provisional strategy was made available following the September 2007 meeting of ACSSPC.

Consultation stage	Timescale	Who we will consult	What we will consult them about	How we will consult them	Comment	Update
Draft structure plan	January 2008 to March 2008	Community Groups Private Sector	Workshop on the draft structure plan	We will hold local workshops involving businesses and community groups to discuss what effect the plan will have on local communities.	The aim of these workshops is to help communities understand how the structure plan may affect them and how they can make representations (objections).	Workshops will be organised in locations throughout the area prior to the deadline for written responses.
		General public Community groups Private Sector Public Sector	Written responses to the draft structure plan	We will place an advert in the local press telling them about the opportunity to take part in developing the structure plan. We will publish the draft structure plan. We will continue to follow the strategy for dealing with the press.	We will invite all organisations listed in appendices 3 to 6 to comment. We will also invite everybody who responded to the issues paper. We will assess all the comments we receive and provide feedback to the people who gave them. We will place their names on a database so we can easily contact them about any further consultations we hold.	Adverts will be placed in the Press & Journal as well as 12 free and local papers throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The plan will be available on the internet with the opportunity to submit comments online. Copies will be available at all public libraries and main Council offices.

Note: The shaded text is an extract from Appendix 2 of the 'Development plan scheme' published on 23 February 2007.