

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development**

**Planning Committee: 6 December 2011**

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**Subject: Development Plan Update**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To update the Committee on the preparation of the Development Plan for the West Dunbartonshire area.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** The current Development Plan for West Dunbartonshire (excluding that area within the National Park) comprises the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan, approved in 2008, and the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010.
- 2.2** Whilst both documents remain current, preparation of their replacements are under way and under the new development plan system approved by the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 these documents will be replaced by a Strategic Development Plan and Local Development Plan respectively.

#### **3. Main Issues**

##### Strategic Development Plan

- 3.1** The Committee has previously considered and submitted comments on the Strategic Development Plan Main Issues Report and Proposed Plan. The Proposed Plan has now been submitted to the Scottish Ministers along with the representations received on it. In total 75 separate representations were received with some raising more than one issue. Issues have been grouped into 36 'Schedule 4', which are the documents that are submitted by the Planning Authority to the Scottish Ministers. Each Schedule 4 outlines the issue, states what each representation had to say on it including any changes being sought to the Plan, and also sets out the Planning Authority's response to it.
- 3.2** Two Reporters from the Scottish Government's Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals have been appointed to examine the Strategic Development Plan and the representations received on it. Whilst much of examination will focus on the Schedule 4s and original representations there will also be public hearings of evidence, which the Strategic Development Plan Authority will lead on for the constituent Councils.

- 3.3** The predominant issue raised in representations, and the likely main focus of the Examination of the Strategic Development Plan is housing. Many house builders and developers feel that the housing land supply in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley area is deficient in terms of quality, choice and effectiveness and are looking for additional housing land release. The Strategic Development Plan Authority's position is that there is sufficient housing land designated and that it would not be a sustainable approach to identify additional sites.
- 3.4** It is expected that the Examination will commence in December and may carry on into the new year. The Committee will be kept up to date of progress through further reports or briefing notes.

#### West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan

- 3.5** The Main Issues Report of the West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan is scheduled for publication in March next year in line with the Development Plan Scheme approved by Committee in April this year. Consultation has taken place on the issues which a Main Issues Report would likely to address. This has included, in recent months, meetings with 15 Elected Members on an individual or ward basis and this has provided useful input to the process.
- 3.6** The issues to be presented in the Main Issues Report and the options for addressing these are now taking shape and it is considered that it is important that these issues and options are discussed in detail with Members ahead of bringing the Main Issues Report to the Planning Committee. It is anticipated that 3 sessions will be required to cover the issues and options in a level of detail required which would not be appropriate at Planning Committee. There are considered to be two options for taking this forward:
- a) Workshops open to all Members of the Planning Committee.
  - b) Workshops for a smaller group of identified Members including the Convenor.
- 3.7** The Development Plan Scheme indicates that the Main Issues Report will be published in March 2012, thereafter to be followed by a minimum 6 week consultation. The optimal time for bringing the Main Issues Report to Committee is March, so allowing time following that for preparing the document for publication and printing would mean a late March publication. These circumstances would mean the consultation period on the Main Issues Report running up to and over 3 May 2012, the date of the local authority elections. Legal advice is that there is no bar on running the consultation up to and over the election - the document is not a policy one and simply identifies issues and options for addressing them, albeit with preferred options in some instances. There could be a chance, however, that some of the issues raised are picked up on in the election campaign and the consultation exercise affected by this.
- 3.8** Taking the above into consideration it is considered that there are two options for the approval and publication of the Main Issues Report which would avoid a significant slippage in its preparation and allow this session's Planning Committee to approve the Main Issues Report. These are:

- a) Approval of the Main Issues Report at March 2012 Planning Committee with consultation launched towards end of that month. This has the advantage of being the timetable currently being worked to. The disadvantage is that the consultation would run up to and over local authority election day.
- b) Approval of the Main Issues Report at March 2012 Planning Committee but with consultation delayed until immediately after the local authority elections. This has the advantage of avoiding the consultation period running up to and over the election. This approach would delay the Plan process by a minimum of 5 weeks and whilst not officially out for consultation the approved documents would be in the public domain.

### Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Local Plan

- 3.9 The National Park Authority published its notice of intention to adopt the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Local Plan 2011 on 21 October 2011. The Plan has been modified to fully incorporate all the changes recommended by the Scottish Government Reporters appointed to examine the Plan. The Plan is due to become adopted on 13 December 2011.

## **4. People Implications**

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues associated with this report.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1 There are no known risks associated with this report.

## **7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 7.1 There are not considered to be any equality issues associated with this report.

## **8. Strategic Assessment**

- 8.1 The decisions required in relation to this report are with regard to process and timetable rather than strategic issues.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 9.1 The adoption of the National Park Local Plan on 13 December will provide West Dunbartonshire with full coverage of an up to date Development Plan. There is ongoing progress with the preparation of replacements plans so as to maintain this position into the future, with the Strategic Development Plan soon to go to examination and preparation of the Local Development Plan Main Issues Report well advanced.
- 9.2 It is recommended that the Committee agree to:

- a) Option a) in paragraph 3.6, being the holding of three workshops open to all Planning Committee Members at which detailed discussions on the issues and options to be presented in the Main Issues Report can be discussed ahead of the document being brought to Planning Committee for approval;  
  
and
- b) Option a) in paragraph 3.8, being the Main Issues Report being brought to Planning Committee for approval in March 2012 with consultation running from the end of March.

**Elaine Melrose**

**Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development**

**Date: 21 November 2011**

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**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning and Building Standards Manger,  
Housing, Environmental and Economic Development, Council  
Offices, Clydebank G81 1TG  
Tel: 01389 738656  
Email: [pamela.clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:pamela.clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

Alan Williamson, Team Leader – Forward Planning  
Housing, Environmental and Economic Development,  
Council Offices, Rosebery Place, Clydebank, G81 1TG  
Tel: 01389 738539  
Email: [alan.williamson@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:alan.williamson@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All

