

**Subject:** Core Strategy

**Status:** For Publication

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**Report to:** Full Council

**Date:** 3 November 2009

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**Report of:** Director of Business

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**Portfolio**

**Holder:** Regeneration

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**Key Decision:** Yes

Forward Plan  General Exception  Special Urgency

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of this Report is to seek approval of the “*Rossendale Core Strategy: the Proposed Way Forward*” for a five week period of extensive consultation with all stakeholders, starting 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009.
- 1.2. Accompanying the Core Strategy for consultation purposes will also be the *Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment*. An additional supporting document *The Core Strategy Background Supporting Information* discusses the previous consultation responses and explains the spatial vision and preferred policies and looks at alternative options as well as deliverability of the policies. These supporting documents will be available for the start of the consultation.
- 1.3. To provide a timetable for delivery of a revised Core Strategy.

**2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 2.1. The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:-
- Delivering quality Services to our customers
  - Delivering regeneration across the Borough
  - Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
  - Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
  - Promoting the Borough
  - Providing value for money services

### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 A Core Strategy is a statutory requirement and failure to progress its development would represent a legal and financial risk to the Council.

### 4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1. As members will be aware the Forward Planning team has been preparing the Core Strategy, a key document in the Local Development Framework, which as a whole will form the replacement for the Rossendale District Local Plan.
- 4.2. Consultation has already been undertaken to help prepare this document, the most recent being earlier this year on the Area Visions, which will form part of the Core Strategy.
- 4.3. The results of all the earlier consultations have been incorporated where appropriate into this Version, including that undertaken for the Area Visions. The Issues and Options consultation took place in November 2005 / January 2006 and this identified key issues and possible options to address these issues. Following on from this, the consultation took place on the Preferred Options Report (April / May 2006) and the subsequent Addendum Report (October 2006). The Addendum Report was produced on the advice of Government Office for the North West (GONW) and sought to illustrate the Preferred Options in a more spatial manner, rather than amend any of the policies.
- 4.4. Since 2006 Central Government guidance has evolved, partly as a response to some of the earlier Development Plan Documents being found unsound. The statutory requirements for preparing Local Development Frameworks as set out in the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, were amended by the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (amendment) Regulations of 2008. Planning Policy Statement 12 "*Local Spatial Planning*" was also revised in 2008. The Council was prudent to delay further progression of the 2006 draft Core Strategy until the full impact of the government response was known, and which has led to the approach now being proposed within this report.
- 4.5. It is now intended to undertake a major public consultation exercise starting on 16<sup>th</sup> November until 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009 on a draft version of the entire document (called *Rossendale Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward*).
- 4.6. *Rossendale Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward* contains the following key sections
- Rossendale Spatial Portrait
  - Vision for Rossendale
  - Strategic Objectives
  - Area Vision Policies
  - Topic Planning Policies

- 4.7. The Spatial Portrait summarises Rossendale’s particular distinctiveness and the key issues that are affecting the Valley. The Vision and Spatial Objectives set out how Rossendale should develop over the period of this plan to 2027. The Spatial Objectives inform the planning policies that are being proposed. The six Area Visions specifically look at local areas (such as Bacup, Stacksteads, Britannia and Weir as well as Haslingden and Rising Bridge). They explain how the overall Vision for Rossendale can be achieved in the local context. The Topic Planning Policies take a more thematic view and address key planning issues such as the provision of housing and employment land, as well as policies addressing issues more specific to Rossendale such as tourism and renewable energy.
- 4.8. This version of the Core Strategy identifies the proposed options that are preferred at this stage, taking into account previous representations, the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment and the Evidence Base documents (such as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Retail and Town Centre Study Update etc). However, it clearly states that previous alternative options are also available for consideration and comment and representations can be made on which option is favoured or indeed if a new option should be taken forward.
- 4.9. The timetable for preparing the Core Strategy has been revised and is shown in the table below.

3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2009	Approval sought from Council to undertake consultation on Rossendale Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward
16th November 2009	Consultation commences (5 weeks)
16th November to 18th December 2009	Consultation
July 2010	Publication of Core Strategy (pre-submission version)
July / August 2010	6 week period to make representations on the soundness Draft Core Strategy (Pre-submission version)
October 2010	Submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination
January 2011	Likely date for examination of the Core Strategy
Summer 2011	Estimated date of adoption of the Core Strategy for Rossendale

- 4.10. The timetable shown above will be inserted in the Local Development Scheme, which will be submitted to Government Office for the North West (GONW)

through the Annual Monitoring Report. It is based on advice from GONW and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

- 4.11 The Screening Report undertaken for the Community Impact Assessment has shown that equality considerations are addressed within the Core Strategy (for example the Vision aims to reduce inequalities by strengthening opportunities in the East and fulfilling the potential of the West). The policies contained in the Core Strategy are subject to Sustainability Appraisal, which considers their social, economic and environmental impacts. The consultation exercise is intended to be extensive and address all sectors of the community. It should also be noted that this is not intended to be the final version of the Core Strategy. Under the Regulations we must prepare a Publication version and submit to the Secretary of State next year for examination.

## **COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

### **5. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 5.1. The costs of this consultation exercise are to be funded from the Core Strategy Development Ear Marked Reserve, within which £10k has been set aside for such requirements.

### **6. MONITORING OFFICER**

- 6.1. Included within Report.

### **7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)**

- 7.1. No Human Resource Implications.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1. The Forward Planning section is progressing the Core Strategy and dates have been set for key milestones. *The Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward* will undergo an extensive consultation with all stakeholders. This is intended to be the last consultation exercise prior to publication and submission to the Secretary of the State, when only the soundness of the document can be commented upon, rather than its overall content

- 8.2. Additional and detailed information on the Core Strategy is available at [www.rossendale.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk/corestrategy)

### **9. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 9.1. To note the content of this Report and approve *The Core Strategy: the Way Forward* for consultation with all stakeholders within the Borough as well as other interested parties and the statutory consultees, from 16<sup>th</sup> November to 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Consultation will also take place on accompanying

documents including the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and the Core Strategy Background Supporting Information

- 9.2. Note in particular the key milestones in the production and adoption of the Core Strategy for incorporation in the Local Development Scheme for Rossendale.

## 10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1. Consultation has been undertaken with Government Office for the North West, the Planning Inspectorate and the LDF/Core Strategy Steering Group.

## 11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a Community Impact Assessment required      Yes       No
- Is a Community Impact Assessment attached      Yes       No

## 12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required      Yes       No
- Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached      Yes       No

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### Background Documents

Document	Place of Inspection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward</li> <li>• Rossendale Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment</li> <li>• The Core Strategy Background Supporting Information</li> </ul>	Forward Planning Section