

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Development and Regeneration (Introduced by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration)	Local Development Framework and Community Strategy Working Group  Executive Cabinet	30 August 07  6 September 07

## **CHORLEY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT SUBMISSION**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To present for endorsement/approval the Development Plan Document for Submission to Government.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S) TO COUNCIL**

2. To endorse/approve the Development Plan Document for Submission to Government subject to minor textual and presentational amendments being delegated to the Director of Development and Regeneration.
3. To delegate to the Director of Development and Regeneration powers to approve minor amendments to the Development Plan Document during the examination stage.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT**

4. Submission is the third stage of preparing a Development Plan Document and is marked by a further period of consultation. The document now presented for approval takes account of earlier representation responses. The policy content of the document has been refined to better achieve more sustainable construction and enable renewable energy generation across Chorley. The Borough is well placed to contribute to reducing the impact of climate change. However ultimately the outcome of the document's preparation will be decided by an Inspector who's recommendations will be binding on the Council.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

#### **(If the recommendations are accepted)**

5. The Submission document needs Executive Cabinet (and Full Council) approval to comply with the Development Plan Regulations. This approval and delegated authority to make amendments will enable progress on this Corporate Strategy Key Project to keep to the published timetable.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

6. Alternative policy options have been considered at the previous preparation stage. The only other alternative open to the Council is to not proceed with the document however the need to help tackle climate change and to fulfil the potential of the Borough to do this, justify proceeding.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the central Lancashire sub region		Improved access to public services	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chance		Develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	X
Involving People in their Communities	X	Ensure Chorley is a performing Organisation	

## BACKGROUND

8. The Submission stage is the third step in preparing a Development Plan Document. Three consultation opportunities were given at the previous Preferred Options stage and the responses received were reported to the Local Development Framework and Community Strategy Working Group at its meeting on 14 June 2007. The Preferred Options document published in March 2007 included alternative options as well as the favoured ones. Overall the representations received generally supported the preferred approaches set out and there was considerable backing for the Council's commitment to the sustainable use of resources. The Submission document now presented for approval takes account of the comments made.
9. The next step is to submit the document to government in a form that the Council wants to adopt as the finalised version. The process is that when the document is submitted a further six week consultation process starts. During this period formal representations can be made and objectors have a right to appear at a public hearing before an independent Inspector. However the Inspector will examine the whole document (irrespective of which parts are objected to) and will also consider how the document has been prepared using the tests of soundness – see Appendix 2 of the attached document.
10. The Inspector has the power to find the document 'unsound' and force the Council to redo it. Alternatively he/she can impose minor changes that the Council will be duty bound to include in the finalised adopted version. If no objectors wish to attend a public hearing the examination process will be carried out through an exchange of written representations. The attached document includes the envisaged timescale for completing the preparation process.
11. In response to representations and/or any queries raised by the Inspector it may be appropriate for the Council to propose minor amendments to the Development Plan Document at short notice during the examination process. To enable these changes to be put forward quickly Officer delegated decisions are likely to be required although Executive Member consultation would be carried out.

## CONTENT OF SUBMISSION DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

12. The overall scope of the document (annexed to this report) remains similar to before:
- To ensure most types of new development are more sustainable in terms of energy use and capture, sourcing of construction materials as well as water use and waste recycling through the incorporation of various building design features - Policy SR1
  - To enable where appropriate, stand-alone renewable energy schemes to be built – Policy SR2

13. The overall aim is to contribute to tackling climate change and reducing other adverse environmental impacts. Policy SR1 is proposed to apply to developments of 5 or more dwellings or non-residential units of 500 or more square metres floorspace. This is a compromise approach between other options previously consulted on which included applying the provisions to all developments irrespective of size and, at the other extreme, applying the provisions to schemes of more than 10 dwellings/over 1000 square metres floorspace.
14. Policy SR2, relating to stand-alone renewable energy schemes, is based on the preferred option previously consulted in that it seeks to ensure there is no unacceptable impact on landscape character and visual appearance.
15. To try to ensure that the policy objectives are met each policy is backed by a series of implementation targets with the aim that these will be progressively increased over time. The approach the Council is taking is in line with national and regional policies and advice but is ahead in terms of the implementation timetable. Full account has also been taken of Chorley's and Lancashire's Community Strategies.
16. Clearly the Borough needs to make a contribution to solving the global problem of climate change and the local research shows the area is well placed to do this, particularly in terms of capturing renewable energy. It will be beneficial for residents and businesses to be at the forefront of implementing these advanced building techniques as it will reduce building running costs, encourage innovation and develop construction skills for wide scale application.

## CONCLUSION

17. It has taken longer than originally expected to get to the Submission stage because of the problems, that many authorities have also had, in fully appreciating the particular preparation requirements of the new development plan system. However, although every effort has now been made to comply with the procedures and policy presentation the Council will ultimately be in the hands of the examining Inspector.
18. Doing a topic base document like this, ahead of an overarching Core Strategy document (at an earlier stage of joint working preparation with Preston and South Ribble Councils), is now frowned upon by the Planning Inspectorate. There is therefore a risk the work will be abortive and hence wasteful of resources as well as harmful to the reputation of the Council. Nevertheless some authorities have successfully taken the route proposed and the justification for pursuing this approach in Chorley is considered strong and backed by the Government Office for the North West.

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

19. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	X		

## COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

20. There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report. However should the document need to be amended significantly then further costs may be incurred. However, funds have been set aside with regards to the Local Development Framework process and such costs would need to be contained within this sum. The targets contained in the report for improvements dealing with climate change may require the Council to commit further resources. An action plan needs to be created as to how the targets will be achieved. Once complete I will report back to Members regarding the financial implications. Such costs are likely to be mainly capital in nature and will require the Council to consider any resource requirements along with other priorities during the creation of the updated financial strategy and future capital programmes.

## COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES

21. The decision of the Cabinet with regards to the contents of the Development Plan will have effect as a recommendation to full Council. This document forms part of the Council's policy framework and, as such, full Council must give its approval before it is submitted to the Secretary of State

JANE E MEEK  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Louise Nurser/Julian Jackson	5281/5280	14 August 07	T/SR SUBMISSION DPD MEMBER REPOORT