Body	**Planning Committee**
Date	**31st October 2006**
Subject	**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY – PREFERRED OPTIONS**
Report of	**Director of Economy, Tourism and Environment**
Ward(s)	All
Purpose	To seek the views of Planning Committee on the proposed consultation of the Council's LDF: Core Strategy – Preferred Options report.
Contact	Iona Cameron, Planning Policy Manager, Planning Policy Unit, 68 Grove Road, Eastbourne, Tel no: (01323) 415255, E-mail: iona.cameron@eastbourne.gov.uk
Recommendations	That Planning Committee endorses the Local Development Framework: Core Strategy – Preferred Options, which will be made available for public consultation between 30th November 2006 and 28th February 2007.

1. Introduction

1.1 The LDF: Core Strategy – presents the Spatial Vision and Objectives for the future growth and development of the Borough until 2026. It lists all the options considered for achieving that vision and presents the Council's preferred options for managing change and development in the Borough.

1.2 Copies of the Core Strategy Preferred Options report have been circulated to the members of the Cabinet, Planning Committee, Leader of the Opposition and Opposition Spokesperson only, in the interests of economy. Copies have been placed in the Members' Room and at the Town Hall reception for inspection purposes and may be viewed on the Council's website at http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/council/meetings/cabinet

1.3 When finalised, the Core Strategy and its key diagram will form the centrepiece of the Eastbourne Local Development Framework (LDF), from which other development plan documents will support. The Core Strategy must also be in line with the emerging South East Plan to 2026 and the Community Strategy to 2020.

2. A New Approach

2.1 New planning policy guidance and legislation has been issued and lessons from pioneer pilot authorities have been published. Local Planning Authorities are now expected to prepare Local Development Framework Core Strategies in partnership with local organisation and other public sector bodies. Local Development Frameworks are encouraged to take a more 'place making' and visionary approach to shaping rather than regulating sustainable communities.

2.2 The Preferred Options report forms the second stage in the production of the LDF: Core Strategy. It is a separate stand alone consultation document rather than a draft version of the final 'submission' version Core Strategy.

2.3 The aims of the Core Strategy – Preferred Options Report seek to satisfy the principles of sustainable communities identified in the accompanying sustainability appraisal, and provide a general strategy for urban growth by which future allocation and area action plans will be considered.

2.4 The emerging options have all been tested by the working groups using sustainability appraisal to ensure economic, social and environmental opportunities are maximised. Two stakeholder forums were also held to give other relevant stakeholders a chance to comment on the vision, spatial objectives and options.

2.5 The LDF Steering Group has been responsible for evaluating the various stages in the process ensuring due diligence and appropriateness of the consensus on the vision, spatial objectives and preferred options. Corporate Management Team and Assistant Directors have also had an input to ensure that the emerging preferred options were consistent with the wider corporate vision and objectives.

3. Key Issues

3.1 Eastbourne, as an award winning resort, continues to go from strength to strength. Over the next few years Eastbourne is set to transform even further – its Town Centre will be dramatically remodelled and rejuvenated, the Seafront will be the focus of physical, social and economic transformation and a new Arts and Cultural Centre in the heart of the town centre promises to reinforce Eastbourne as a vibrant world class visitor destination.

3.2 At the same time, Eastbourne has been identified as key area in the development of the Sussex Coastal towns as a whole (South East England Regional Assembly 2004). It continues to face pressure for development, and the South East Plan identifies a requirement of 4,800 new homes for Eastbourne up to 2026. This is an average of 240 units per annum. However the protection of the Downland, flooding in the Levels and coastal zone, are important physical constraints that means

there are limited opportunities for greenfield development within the Borough.

3.3 The emphasis will therefore be on finding new opportunities for renewal and redevelopment that are in areas of low flood risk. Eastbourne Borough Council is working in partnership with Wealden District Council, on the joint commissioning of evidence for policy formulation. Studies such as a joint Housing Market Assessment to understand the housing market in more detail, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to supplement the Environment Agency's current flood risk information in line with the draft guidance in PPS25[1].

3.4 Key development issues over the next 20 years will be to address these and the following considerations:

- Maintaining the town's high quality seafront, as well as its parks and gardens, whilst allowing the town to respond to the need for more activities for young people and to consolidate our attraction for tourists as a world class visitor destination;
- Allowing businesses to expand and make the town more attractive for inward investment
- Making the town centre more vibrant and attractive to shoppers,;
- Encouraging more community uses and health facilities in locations that the community find more accessible;
- Careful conservation of the town's historic environment balanced with encouraging high quality development;
- Increasing opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport and reducing car dependency;
- Providing better housing, addressing anti-social behaviour, providing jobs and improving facilities for young people, particularly in areas of severe deprivation;
- Providing modern and accessible facilities and open spaces to encourage a healthy and active community;
- Ensuring that new developments plan for consequences as well as reducing the causes of climate change.

3.5 The Core Strategy – Preferred Options Report is broken down into eleven key themes identified from responses to the previous Core Strategy – Issues and Options paper, the Sustainability Appraisal scoping report, and national and regional policy. Each theme has a vision, a set of spatial objectives, options considered and a recommended preferred option. The 11 key themes are:-

1. How and where do we in Eastbourne sustainably accommodate future housing development?

[1] PPS25 is the National Planning Policy Guidance for Flood risk. It seeks to direct new development to areas of lowest flood risk.

2. **How do we address deprivation?**
3. **How can we support business development and generate better paying jobs?**
4. **How can we make Eastbourne a more attractive place to shop and visit?**
5. **How can we protect and enhance our natural environment parks and greenspaces?**
6. **How do we enhance the facilities whilst preserving the character of the seafront?**
7. **What actions do we take to ensure development does not adversely affect our historic environment?**
8. **How do we reduce car dependency and encourage greener travel alternatives?**
9. **What can we do to encourage more healthy and active communities?**
10. **How do we meet the needs of special interest groups, as well as young and older people?**
11. **How do we make building stock in Eastbourne more energy efficient and incorporate on-site renewable energy technology?**

3.6 The Core Strategy – Preferred Options Report is a significant document that may need minor amendment as it progresses through to publication stage at the end of next month. Therefore it is prudent to allow officers to make minor alterations to the document subject to consultation with the relevant Portfolio Member and Director.

3.7 In line with the statutory regulations a key diagram, a Sustainability Appraisal, and a Consultation Statement will also accompany the Core Strategy – Preferred options when they are published in November.

4. Consultation

4.1 The Preferred Options report has been worked up though several working groups made up of internal officers and representatives from local organisations and societies as well as two 'stakeholder events'.

4.2 These initial review findings were further discussed at the Local Development Framework Steering Group, which consists of Cllr Elkin and Cllr Thompson, the Assistant Director for Economy, Tourism and Planning, Head of Planning and the Planning Policy Manager. Cllr Warner has also recently sat on the Steering Group, representing Cllr Elkin.

4.3 The Planning Service has acquired specialist software to simplify, and better engage, with the public during the consultation on the Core Strategy. The software will enable the public to make their comments (objections and support) on the documents, directly and easily online, using the Eastbourne Borough Council website www.eastbourne.gov.uk All comments made along with the planning policy officers responses, will also be visible to the general public via the website allowing them to make a more informed and interactive response.

4.4 For those who do not have access to a computer they can still comment by post using the official Core Strategy response forms..

4.5 The consultation period is between 30 November 2006 and 28 February 2007, a 12 week period to match the Eastbourne Compact Agreement. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, any comments received after 5pm on 28 February cannot be considered as being duly made.

4.6 The consultation on the Core Strategy – Preferred Options report will be borough wide and conform to the guidelines laid down in the Statement of Community Involvement. However a specific consultation statement is also being prepared and this will be signed off as appropriate after discussion by the LDF Steering Group.

4.7 Cabinet debated a similar report at their meeting on 25 October 2006 and a verbal update will be given at the meeting. One of the recommendations to Cabinet is that delegated authority be given to officers to make revisions following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Member and to the satisfaction of the Director of Economy, Tourism and Environment. Therefore any amendments proposed by Planning Committee can be made under that authority.

5. Implications

5.1 Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011

The Borough Plan (2001-2011) consists of various chapters which will gradually all be updated. The '**Core Strategy'** will almost certainly replace some of the major policies within the Borough Plan relating to flooding and housing as well employment land when it is finally adopted. However the Council cannot approve the final version until the Planning Inspectorate has judged it to be 'sound'. This is unlikely to be before August 2008. Until such time the Borough Plan remains the 'development plan' for planning and development control purposes.

5.2 Financial

The LDF has been funded through the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) as well as an annual Base Budget of £13,000. It is fully expected that PDG awards will continue to fund this part of the Service until March 2008. The Service and Financial Plan has identified this area as a potential growth item from 2008 and this will be a feature of a future report.

5.3 Legal

The production of Local Development Framework documents are a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and their contents guided by the Town and Country Planning

regulations (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

5.4 **Human Resources**

The Local Development Framework effectively sets the work programme for the Planning Policy Unit over the next three years. It therefore has significant resource and staffing implications that can be met with a full complement of staff.

5.5 **Environmental/Community Safety/Human Rights/Anti Poverty**

There are no adverse impacts on these implications as a direct result of this report.

6. Conclusions

6.1 This report seeks the views of Planning Committee on the Core Strategy – Preferred Options report which is being published for public consultation from the 30th November 2006 to 28th February 2007.

Norman Kinnish
Director of Economy, Tourism and Environment

Background Papers:

Local Development Scheme – 2006
Creating Local Development Frameworks - A Companion Guide to PPS12
Service and Financial Plan – 2006-7
Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011