

LDF Task Group Meeting
22nd April 2008
The Bishops Palace, Hereford

Attendees.

Group members:

Cllr. J. Jarvis – Cabinet Member, Environment & Strategic Housing
Brian Atherton – Herefordshire Partnership
Cllr. B. Wilcox – Cabinet Member, Highways & Transportation
Mark July – Herefordshire Partnership
Wendy Coombey – Herefordshire Partnership

Officers Present:

Phillipa Lydford – Herefordshire Partnership
Andrew Ashcroft – Head of Planning Services
Dave Nicholson – Forward Planning
Kevin Nicholson – Forward Planning
Chris Botwright – Forward Planning
Jane Reeves – Forward Planning
Siobhan Riddle – Forward Planning

Apologies:

Cllr. A. Blackshaw – Cabinet Member, Economic Development & Community Services.

Notes of last Meeting

Everybody was happy with the content of the minutes from the last meeting.

Regional Spatial Strategy

The Government are not happy with the housing figures within the RSS, and believe higher figures are required, they have hired a consultant to work on this. The report will be completed by the 1st week in October, with the preferred option consultation being extended until the 8th December.

Core Strategy

- **Options Paper**

Additional work had been undertaken upon the draft options presented to the previous Task Group including discussions with stakeholders and sustainability appraisal work.

A new objective for transport (4 & 5) had been added which was broken down into location.

Option A has remained unchanged from the previous draft, it has a focus on the economy, with an eastern arc which encompasses the A49 corridor, and also Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Bromyard and Ledbury as well as Hereford and the hinterland surrounding it.

If this option was chosen as the preferred option then the majority of new housing within the County would be placed within Hereford and the eastern arc.

Option B focuses on social issues and is an amalgamation of previous options B & C, the main issues in this option are around deprivation in terms of access to services. This is more of a dispersed approach to include Hereford and all of the market towns, and rural areas as yet to be defined. It was noted that whereas the South West is less accessible than the rest of the County, this option would not necessarily rule out some growth in that area.

Option C focuses on the environment. This was done after internal discussions based on enhancing the County's environmental assets or providing new assets and connectivity to them.

Option D is to expand an existing or introduce a new settlement. This Option needs to be handled sensitively, but as yet there have been no discussions as to the location of a new settlement. Need to think about transport links etc before deciding where to place the settlement.

- **Sustainability Appraisal/Habitat Regulation Assessment (SA/HRA)**

These are important elements that are required under European Legislation. The sustainability appraisal incorporates social, economic and environmental effects and how they will effect the options and objectives set out in the Core Strategy. This has been started but not yet completed, there remains a lot of work still to be done on this. SA and HRA reports would be published alongside the Options Paper.

There is a requirement to carry out a HRA assessment on anything that is likely to be affected by any of the options, at the moment there are 15 sites in the County and around the borders that need consideration. This document like the Sustainability appraisal will be published with the Options paper. It is also important to keep a record of how the SA process has changed policies through the plan making process.

Evidence Base

- **Overview**

The position with the background studies were detailed to all at the meeting. There have been difficulties with getting information from Welsh Water for the Water Cycle Study. The Employment Land Review has gone out to consultants.

A review paper is being prepared for the Retail Study. The Green Infrastructure and the Open Space Study will be completed soon.

Highways Agency has taken a lead role in the Transport Study.

Three tenders had been submitted so far for the waste and Minerals SPD, work on this is to commence soon. The Final Draft report has been published for the Gypsy/Travellers Assessment.

- **Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

The SHLAA was a particularly important element of the evidence base which was being undertaken in-house, it would be used to demonstrate the housing supply in the County which would be utilised to deliver the Core Strategy.

At the moment the housing figure for Herefordshire stands at 16,600, of which 8,300 will be in Hereford City with the remaining 8,300 for the rest of the County.

Initially a 'call for sites' from the public was undertaken, as well as looking at historically known land around Herefordshire. Work to date had concentrated upon identifying potential sites in Hereford and the Market Towns. This was a criteria led selection carried out by Forward Planning Officers to identify whether sites have significant constraints i.e. liable to flooding risk etc, minor or no constraints. The majority of the land has significant constraints.

Further technical work was required to be undertaken with other departments such as Conservation and Transport and external stakeholders to determine the full extent of potential constraints.

Date for Next Meeting

13th October 2008 at 2:00pm.