

Overview and Scrutiny Review – Scrutiny of the Emergent Joint Core Strategy – to recommend to full Council – NBC’s formal response to the consultation

Equality Impact Assessment – screening.

Name of Strategy/Policy: Overview and Scrutiny Review: Scrutiny of the Emergent Joint Core Strategy – to recommend to full Council – NBC’s formal response to the consultation on the Emergent Joint Core Strategy and to identify any gaps.

Date of Assessment: **5 August 2009**

Is this a new or updated Policy? New Updated

How is the Strategy/Policy finalised/adopted: Cabinet/Board Delegated

Lead Officer conducting the assessment: **Tracy Tiff** Job Title: **Scrutiny Officer**

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Others involved in the assessment (*this could include service users, front line officers, people with specialist knowledge or interest*):

Councillor Andrew Simpson, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1

Paul Lewin, Planning Policy and Conservation Manager

Identify what the activity is trying to achieve – why is the Policy/activity¹ required (*is there a statutory duty, how was the issue identified, who was the originator of the activity, etc*).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 (Regeneration, Partnerships, Community Engagement and Safety) is looking into the appropriateness and level of consultation undertaken and whether it is addressing the right organizations. The Committee will take into consideration the six equality strands (age, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disabilities and ethnic origin).

Details of development contained in the document itself (Emergent Core Joint Strategy) will affect all residents of Northampton in some way.

¹ Policy/activity in this context includes policies, services, strategies, functions, projects, plans, restructures, major events, etc

As part of this piece of scrutiny work, the Committee will look at the vision of the emergent Joint Core Strategy to ascertain whether it is consistent with regional guidance (Regional Spatial Strategy). Short research has indicated that there does not appear to have been an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken for this Strategy. However, if one has been undertaken it will indicate that issues have been investigated at regional level.

An Equality Impact Assessment for the Emergent Joint Core Strategy has not been undertaken. Therefore, within the Committee's report it could suggest that any impact on the six equality strands be taken into account. The Committee might also consider including in its report to full Council that this Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken and it should be considered when the consultation process is taken further.

Purpose of the Policy/activity. *(What does the activity entail? Consider how the activity relates to the council's equality and diversity duties and strategic priorities, etc).*

The purpose of the Review is to recommend to full Council NBC's formal response to the Emergent Joint Core Strategy.

Identify the main beneficiaries or people affected by the issue *(who benefits or is affected - local residents and users of area, community at large, visitors to the town, contractors working in the area, people delivering the service etc).*

Members and Officers of the Council - as the expected outcome of the Review is to recommend to full Council NBC's formal response to the Emergent Joint Core Strategy.

What information exists already?

- Briefing Note: Emergent Joint Core Strategy
- Sub Regional Strategies
- Emergent Joint Core Strategy Evidence Base
- Joint Planning in West Northamptonshire – The Emergent Core Strategy: Essential Background Information
- West Northamptonshire Emergent Joint Core Strategy 2009

Could a particular sector of the community be disadvantaged by the strategy/policy.

Yes No *(give details of any evidence you may have)*

The Emergent Joint Core Strategy could have adverse and positive impact on the six equality strands. However, as no Equality Impact Assessment has been completed yet for the Emergent Strategy, its impact on these groups has not been subject to a detailed level of scrutiny. The Overview and Scrutiny

Committee is unlikely to have time to consider all aspects of the document itself during the timescale set for consultation, and focuses on a relatively tight focus of specific lines of inquiry. The committee will be mindful of the six strands when undertaking its scrutiny task so that any recommendations that it makes can identify potential positive and negative impacts on any particular sector of the community. The Committee can at the very least however, highlight in its report the lack of an Equality Impact Assessment for the Emergent Joint Core Strategy could mean that the Emergent Strategy might have an unintended adverse impact on any particular sector of the community.

In terms of the working of the Committee and its impact on the equality strands, paper copies of the agenda for the meetings of this Committee were issued to all Members of the Council, relevant officers and anyone else who is on the distribution list who had previously requested paper copies. Electronic versions of the agenda are issued to a wider circulation of Officers, the local press and radio, and also individuals who have requested to be kept informed of the work of this Committee. Provision has been made for members of public who have a disability, e.g. the documents are written in 12scale font with a yellow front cover for those who may suffer from a visual impairment, the blind have access to 'talking' documents, those whose first language is not English have access to translation services and the building in which the meetings will occur contain hearing loops and are accessible by those with severe mobility issues, such as wheel chair users.

It could be found that the timing of these meetings (evenings) may not be suitable to all. However, the meeting to be held on 12 August 2009 is scheduled for 7pm rather than 6pm.

If no, then have this confirmed by the Corporate Equalities Steering Group representative for your area and signed off by your Service Head / Corporate Director/ Board. In the event of any queries, check with a member of the Policy team.

Action points (*please make this SMART-state what/who/how/when See action plan below*)

1. The data gathered would be reviewed and appropriate recommendations made.
2. If it is found that it is difficult to obtain evidence due to a lack of data, it may be necessary to consider monitoring to improve data intelligence. If required this will be undertaken using the principles set out in the EIA Toolkit.
- 3 That an Equality Impact Assessment of the Emergent Joint Core Strategy is carried out and any actions arising out of this are linked.

I agree that this policy/activity should not proceed to a full Impact Assessment (If appropriate, date equality impact assessment will commence)

Confirmed by:

Signed by:

Please attach a copy of this screening to the document it relates

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Copy to be sent to Policy Team Leader at policy@northampton.gov.uk

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