

Item No: 11
Date: 16 December 2008

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

<b>Responding to Consultation Documents</b>
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**REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT**

**Background**

- 1.1 The West Northamptonshire Strategic Joint Planning Committee (the Joint Strategic Planning Committee) is set up and is referred to as a Local Planning Authority for the purposes of Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This means that the Joint Planning Committee should be consulted on matters set out in Part 2 of that Act. These matters include the Development Plan Documents of the constituent Councils of the JSPC, the Development Plan Documents of neighbouring authorities (listed in Appendix 1 of this report) and the Regional Plans of both the East Midlands and neighbouring regions. In addition the JSPC is likely to be invited to respond to a range of national, regional and local documents including draft Planning Policy Statements, the Regional Economic Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategies.

**Current Approach**

- 1.2 Currently responsibility for responding to consultation documents rests with the Joint Strategic Planning Committee itself. Given the fact that the period in which a response on a document needs to be made is limited (e.g. the statutory period of consultation on emerging LDF documents is six weeks) and that the Committee meet bi-monthly, it will not always be possible for the Committee to consider a report on a consultation document and respond within the deadline.
- 1.3 To date the Joint Planning Unit has submitted responses to the East Midlands Regional Plan Proposed Changes, the Rugby Core Strategy Preferred Options, the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy Proposed Submission and Control and Management of Development DPD, and the Cherwell Core Strategy Options for Growth on behalf of the Committee but before Committee approval in order to meet the consultation response deadlines. In the case of the East Midlands Regional Plan Proposed Changes the officer comments were subsequently considered at the inaugural meeting of the JSPC and additional comments submitted to the Government Office for the East Midlands.

## **Future Delegation**

- 1.4 Delegation of consultations will avoid duplication of efforts between councils and demonstrate good partnership working whilst also respecting the right of the councils to respond individually should they consider this necessary. It is clear that only consultations that relate to the strategic work of the JSPC are matters for this form of response.

## **Recommendation**

- 1.5 The Joint Strategic Planning Committee is recommended to delegate the responsibility for responding to consultation documents to the Head of the Joint Planning Unit in consultation with the Chair of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee. This would apply only to consultations of strategic significance to West Northamptonshire which will be judged through discussion with the officers of the Programme Board.
- 1.6 In instances where it is considered both necessary and appropriate for a document to be considered by the Committee, then, where timescales necessitate it, the Head of the Joint Planning Unit will with the agreement of the Chair of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee submit a response by the due deadline pending formal ratification, as an amendment, by the Committee when it next meets.

## **Appendix 1 – Neighbouring Authorities to West Northamptonshire**

### Neighbouring Borough and District Councils

Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Bedford Borough Council  
Borough Council of Wellingborough  
Cherwell District Council  
Kettering Borough Council  
Milton Keynes Council  
Harborough District Council  
Rugby Borough Council  
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

### Neighbouring County Councils

Bedfordshire County Council  
Buckinghamshire County Council  
Leicestershire County Council  
Oxfordshire County Council  
Warwickshire County Council

### Neighbouring Joint Strategic Planning Committees

North Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee

### Neighbouring Regions

East of England Regional Assembly  
South East England Regional Assembly  
West Midlands Regional Assembly