



Council	Tuesday, 05 December 2017	Matter for Information and Decision
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Title: **Draft Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire**

Author(s): **Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning, Development
and Regeneration)**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the work undertaken to date in the preparation of a Draft Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) for Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 1.2. A similar version of this report, together with the recommendations contained at paragraphs 2.1 - 2.4 below, is being considered by each of the partner authorities.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. That Council notes and endorses the process which has been undertaken in the preparation of a Draft Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) for Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 2.2. That Council notes that the Consultation Draft Plan has been endorsed by the Members' Advisory Group (MAG) which oversees the preparation of the SGP.
- 2.3. That Council approves the consultation process and timetable.
- 2.4. That a further report is brought back to Council to consider the consultation responses and approve the final version of the SGP.

3. Background

- 3.1. Until 2010, the strategic planning framework for Leicester and Leicestershire was set out in the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009), the regional spatial strategy for the East Midlands. In 2010, however, regional spatial strategies were abolished by Government and local planning authorities were encouraged to consider strategic planning within the context of the 'duty to co-operate' imposed by the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.2. In Leicester and Leicestershire, the local planning authorities decided that strategic planning for the longer term would be more effective if undertaken across the City and County as a whole. Responding to the important role of the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) in the delivery of infrastructure and economic growth, the LLEP became an additional partner in the process.
- 3.3. The SGP has, therefore, been prepared jointly and on a collaborative basis by the ten partner organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire (i.e. all eight of the local planning authorities, the County Council as highway authority, the City Council as a unitary authority with combined planning and highways responsibilities, and the local enterprise partnership). Leicester and Leicestershire is fortunate in that the Housing Market Area, the Functional Economic Market Area and the area covered by the LLEP are the same: having the same geographical boundaries for these areas therefore means that it is easier to plan for the future. Although there is a need to collaborate with authorities outside Leicester and Leicestershire, the intention is that provision for

housing and economic development needs will be met from within the area.

- 3.4. The SGP, published in August 2016, stated that the ten partner organisations had agreed that the Strategic Growth Plan would:
- be clear about the opportunities and challenges that are to be faced;
 - provide an agreed scale and direction for future growth, reflecting the evidence available and the will of the partners;
 - create a single consistent strategic framework for Local Plans, economic investment plans, transport and other infrastructure plans;
 - ensure that Leicester and Leicestershire is positively positioned to take advantage of private sector inward investment opportunities and national programmes for investment; and
 - provide the right conditions for the growth of indigenous businesses, and, at the same time, protect the area's natural resources, environment and historic assets.
- 3.5. The current Consultation Draft Plan takes forward this work. It sets out a strategy for the growth and development of Leicester and Leicestershire in the period to 2050. This time period allows the partners to think about the longer term needs of the area and to consider opportunities which might extend beyond the conventional timeframe of a Local Plan. Within this time period, however, MAG has considered the distribution of housing and employment land for the periods 2011-2031 and 2011-2036 so that the partners have a more detailed framework for the preparation of Local Plans.
- 3.6. The Strategic Growth Statement was the first stage in the preparation of the Plan. Having completed governance procedures in early summer 2016, it was the subject of public consultation in August/September 2016. The document stated the ambition of the partners was to overcome the problems that are experienced by existing communities and to accommodate growth in new developments that have a real sense of place and purpose. It also explained that the partners wanted to raise the bar in terms of the quality of development: so the focus has been on how the City and the County can be improved for local people and businesses, and, therefore, how growth can be delivered at the right time, in the right place and with the essential infrastructure it needs. Consultation responses were reported to MAG in early 2017.
- 3.7. Throughout the discussions on the SGP, the focus has been on defining a long term future for Leicester and Leicestershire, looking ahead as far as 2050. This end date was chosen, in part, to provide additional flexibility in terms of the potential solutions that might be considered but also because other stakeholders were known to be planning for, and trying to secure funding for, projects with end dates which extended well beyond the timeframe of a Local Plan.
- 3.8. Since work started on the SGP, other organisations have progressed their own work at different speeds (e.g. Network Rail, Highways England, the Midlands Connect Partnership) but there has been a constant dialogue to ensure an awareness of their emerging policies and proposals, and that projects considered to be vital to the future of Leicester and Leicestershire were incorporated in emerging plans, strategies and funding programmes.
- 3.9. As the Consultation Draft Plan has been developed, a number of events have been held for Members to keep them advised of progress, including all Member Briefings Sessions and discussions at meetings of the Place Shaping Working Group.
- 3.10. In addition, the Leader of the Council has also attended a number of MAG meetings, as the Council's representative, at which the shape, structure and content of the

Consultation Draft Plan has been discussed.

4. Proposed Consultation Process

4.1. With the Consultation Draft SGP having been endorsed by MAG, a period of public consultation now needs to take place. The detail and the extent of consultation that is to take place will vary between the partner organisations, to provide flexibility for each to reflect their own practices. In practice, however, there needs to be an 'agreed minimum' which each local authority will adopt. It is recognised that the LLEP has a different role in this process.

A copy of the Consultation Draft SGP Plan is attached at the ***Appendix***.

4.2. The following will provide the basis of the public consultation:

- the Consultation Draft Plan;
- a short, simple consultation leaflet. It is anticipated that this would constitute an A3 sheet of paper folded in such a way that the reasons for preparing the plan are set out on the front page, the strategy diagram with explanatory notations are set out on the centre spread and the final page should provide details of proposed housing numbers and ways in which consultation responses can be submitted;
- all supporting documentation;
- a standard presentation, with notes, to be used by individual organisations to ensure that a consistent message is conveyed;
- a consultation questionnaire; and
- one or more joint press releases.

4.3. The consultation process will be managed, primarily, through the web sites for both the SGP and partner organisations. It is anticipated that all material will be held on the web site for the SGP with a link from partner organisations. Arrangements will also be made for comments to be submitted by post.

4.4. It is intended that consultation will start during week commencing 8 January 2018 and continue for twelve weeks.

4.5. All consultation responses will be reviewed and reported, in the first instance, to MAG. At the same time, consideration will be given to whether amendments to the Draft Plan will need to be made.

4.6. It is anticipated that the final version of the SGP will be presented to MAG for consideration in summer/early autumn 2018. If agreed, it will proceed through the governance arrangements of the partner organisations.

Background Documents:

Appendix - Consultation Draft Strategic Growth Plan

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Implications Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire	
Finance Chris Raymakers (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits)	<p>There is a cost associated with the preparation of the SGP which is split between each of the partner organisations. Where appropriate, costs are split determined by the size of the population in each local authority area. The Borough Council's proportion of the cost has been budgeted for in the Council's revenue budget.</p>
Legal Dave Gill (Head of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer)	<p>The SGP is a non-statutory plan.</p>
Corporate Risk(s) (CR) Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning Development and Regeneration)	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key Supplier/Partnership Failure (CR2)</p> <p>The SGP is being prepared jointly by 10 partner organisations which all need an involvement in the process. Close working at both an officer and member level through established groups allows for this involvement.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political Dynamics (CR3)</p> <p>A similar version of this report, together with the recommendations, is being considered by each of the partner authorities.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reputation Damage (CR4)</p> <p>The SGP is a high profile document covering Leicester and Leicestershire.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economy/Regeneration (CR9)</p> <p>The SGP will assist in the delivery of infrastructure and economic growth.</p>
Corporate Priorities (CP) Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning Development and Regeneration)	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</p> <p>Public consultation of the SGP will allow involvement in the preparation of the document.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Balanced Economic Development (CP3)</p> <p>The SGP will assist in the delivery of infrastructure and economic growth.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Green & Safe Places (CP4)</p> <p>The SGP supports the protection of important land designations which can be protected through policies in the Council's Local Plan.</p>
Vision & Values (V) Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning Development and Regeneration)	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork (V3)</p> <p>The SGP involves teamwork across Leicester and Leicestershire partner authorities.</p>
Equalities & Equality	<p>An EA will accompany the SGP during the public consultation, but is not applicable in respect of this particular report.</p>

Assessment(s) (EA)	
Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning Development and Regeneration)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (EA)