



Full Council	Tuesday, 11 December 2018	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **The Strategic Growth Plan - "Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth"**

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

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to enable Council to consider the revised Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (the revised SGP) which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
Report Summary:	Approval of the SGP will put in place a key long-term strategy for the future development and prosperity of Leicester & Leicestershire. For the Borough of Oadby & Wigston, it will provide the context for the Council to be able to prepare and deliver its forthcoming Local Plans.
Recommendation(s):	<p>A. That the Strategic Growth Plan "Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth" ("the SGP") (as set out at Appendix 1) be approved; and</p> <p>B. That the Chief Executive (or equivalent) of each SGP partner authority, following consultation with the Leader of that authority and the Joint Strategic Planning Manager, be authorised to agree, prior to publication, any final minor amendments to the SGP which do not significantly change the overall content or purpose of the document.</p>
Responsible Strategic Director, Head of Service and Officer Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Director of Finance & Transformation) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Planning, Development and Regeneration) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Carr (Planning Policy Team Leader) (0116) 257 2652 jamie.carr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Priorities:	<p>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1) Effective Service Provision (CP2) Balanced Economic Development (CP3) Green & Safe Places (CP4) Wellbeing for All (CP5)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Respect (V2) Teamwork (V3) Innovation (V4)</p>

	Customer Focus (V5)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from the report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising directly from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Key Supplier/Partnership Failure (CR2) Political Dynamics (CR3) Reputation Damage (CR4) Economy/Regeneration (CR9)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	<p>By seeking to ensure that economic growth is secured, and appropriate provision for market and affordable homes is made, the implementation of the SGP can contribute to meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups across Leicester & Leicestershire.</p> <p>An Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqHRIA) has been undertaken. The outcomes of the assessment are available to view in a report which supports the SGP. The assessment considers a number of options for the spatial distribution of growth within Leicester & Leicestershire, including that of the SGP. It is clear that different options have the potential to impact, in different ways, on matters such as age, disability, race, religion or belief (some positive, some negative and some neutral). Other matters are not likely to be affected.</p> <p>As this is a high-level strategic plan, however, the responsibility for mitigating any adverse impacts upon individuals or community groups will fall to subsequent statutory plans, primarily Local Plans prepared by individual authorities. In most cases, it will be important to ensure that specific infrastructure and services are planned effectively to deal with the specific needs of these groups. The EqHRIA ensures that the partner organisations are aware of the various impacts of the SGP and enables them to put in place any necessary mitigating measures and/or enhancements.</p> <p>See Background Documents Section.</p>
Human Rights:	No implications.
Health and Safety:	No implications.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	There are no immediate resource implications as support for the development of the Plan is being resourced through existing staffing and operational budgets. The long term delivery of the SGP will be dependent on the necessary resources being secured to finance the delivery of key infrastructure required to enable the delivery of the SGP. It will be important that such infrastructure is delivered in parallel with the growth outlined in the SGP.

Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	Full public consultation has been carried out on the SGP.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation reports • Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment • Sustainability Appraisal <p>Documents are available upon request from the report author.</p>
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Strategic Growth Plan - "Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth" 2. Key Changes Made Following Consultation on the Draft Strategic Growth Plan 3. Risk Assessment

1. Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 1.1 On the 19 July 2016, Policy, Finance and Development Committee approved the Strategic Growth Statement for consultation. This formed the first stage in the development of the SGP. The Statement:
- set out the rationale and proposed process for the preparation of the SGP;
 - identified the defining characteristics of the local area and challenges faced by the partners;
 - outlined the evidence base that would be assembled and the generic spatial options to be considered in formulating a SGP, and;
 - set out initial objectives and ambitions for the future.
- 1.2 A Consultation Draft SGP was considered and endorsed by the Members' Advisory Group (MAG) on the 6 November 2017. It was subsequently approved for the purpose of public consultation by Full Council on the 5 December 2017. A 17 week consultation period began on the 11 January 2018 and closed on the 10 May 2018.

2. Context

- 2.1 The background to the development of the draft SGP includes the revocation of regional spatial strategies by the government in 2012 and the resulting need for local planning authorities to consider strategic planning within the context of the 'duty to co-operate' required by the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 In Leicester & Leicestershire, it was decided by the local planning authorities that long term strategic planning would be more effective if undertaken across the City and the County, and included the local enterprise partnership, the LLEP, as a partner.
- 2.3 The SGP has, therefore, been prepared jointly by the eight local planning authorities (the borough and district councils), the County Council as the highway authority and the City Council as a unitary authority with combined planning and highways responsibilities. Each of these is represented on the MAG which, supported by senior officers, has overseen the preparation of the Plan. The LLEP attends MAG in the capacity of an observer. Homes England (formerly the Homes & Communities Agency) attends the senior officer group in the capacity of an observer.
- 2.4 The SGP will:
- support partners to plan effectively for the future, giving Local Plans a consistent

- framework, help to make decisions on infrastructure and secure Government funding;
- give some control over accommodating and supporting future growth and help to protect and enhance environmental assets; and
- provide confidence to the market, Government, local businesses and residents that the local councils and the LLEP are working together to manage the growth of the area in a plan-led and co-ordinated manner.

2.5 In this context, the SGP is very much the start of the conversation and not the end of the conversation. In addition, legislation requires the Borough Council to co-operate with other Councils in Leicester and Leicestershire under the duty to cooperate in the preparation of its own Local Plan. The SGP is significant in enabling the Council to meet this requirement and therefore to control growth in the future through its own Local Plans.

2.6 There are risks in not having a SGP and these are summarised in **Appendix 3**.

2.7 As the SGP has been developed, a number of events have been held for Members to keep them advised of progress. This has included all-Member briefings on the SGP. The draft Plan also went through normal governance procedures in autumn/winter 2017.

3. Key Elements of the SGP

3.1 The SGP sets out a strategy for the growth and development of Leicester and Leicestershire in the period to 2050, enabling partners to consider the longer term needs of the area and opportunities which extend beyond the conventional timeframe of a Local Plan. MAG considered the distribution of housing and employment land over the period 2011-31 and 2011-36 in the context of the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (January 2017) in order to give a more detailed framework for shorter term Local Plans.

3.2 There have been on-going discussions with organisations such as Network Rail and Midlands Connect to ensure that their emerging policies and proposals are incorporated in emerging plans, strategies and funding programmes where necessary.

3.3 The SGP proposes that overall, most development will take place in major strategic locations with less development happening in existing towns, villages and rural areas; in so doing, it allows new development to be focused along transport corridors and close to employment centres.

3.4 The five building blocks that have been used to prepare the Plan are an understanding and appreciation of:

- the existing settlement pattern;
- national policies, particularly in relation to planning, housing and infrastructure provision;
- the local economy and how it is supported by the Midlands Engine Strategy (March 2017);
- road and rail networks and the proposals and priorities of the Midlands Connect Strategy (March 2017); and
- the area's environmental, historic and other assets.

3.5 Four priorities are identified in the SGP:

- creating conditions for investment and growth;
- achieving a step change in the way that growth is delivered;
- securing essential infrastructure; and
- delivering high quality development.

3.6 Analysis has indicated that through existing and emerging Local Plans and planning

permissions the amount of new housing needed in the area to 2031 can be met. This will be achieved through a mixture of major strategic sites already identified in Local Plans (approximately 40%) and smaller scale growth on non-strategic sites (approximately 60%). The proposed new spatial distribution of strategic development, therefore, does not need to focus on this time period but it remains an important part of the plan's strategy e.g. to accelerate the delivery of consented and allocated sites we need to secure the infrastructure which is essential to their success.

3.7 Beyond 2031, the SGP proposes that more growth should be directed to strategic locations. This requires new strategic infrastructure to open up land for development and the Midlands Connect Strategy (setting out key transport priorities for the East and West Midlands) lays the foundations for this.

4. Proposed Growth Areas

4.1 The proposed growth areas are:

- Leicester City;
- the A46 Growth Corridor;
- the Leicestershire International Gateway;
- the A5 Improvement Corridor; and
- the Melton Mowbray Key Centre for Regeneration and Growth.

4.2 Coalville, Hinckley, Loughborough, Lutterworth and Market Harborough are identified as areas where growth would be managed in Local Plans.

4.3 In the villages and rural areas, the SGP proposes that there will be limited growth consistent with providing for local needs.

5. Public Consultation

5.1 A 17-week consultation period took place from 11 January-10 May 2018. Activities included:

- press releases, periodic media coverage;
- emails/letters to statutory consultees;
- emails/letters to organisations and groups identified by partners;
- public exhibitions;
- copies of the Draft SGP and summary leaflets;
- paper copies of questionnaires and all evidence at main offices;
- SGP website;
- links to the SGP website from partner websites; and
- social media messages.

5.2 A total of 588 responses were received, 79% of which were from members of the public. These comments have been analysed and considered during the preparation of the revised SGP. A summary of key changes is attached as **Appendix 2**.

5.3 In line with the Statement of Community Involvement, those respondents who provided contact details have been informed that a revised plan has been prepared. The opportunity for further comment will take place during governance and/or the preparation of Local Plans.

6. Environmental Implications

6.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) (SEA) has been undertaken together with a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The

outcomes are available to view in a report supporting the SGP. The SA concludes that the SGP has the potential to deliver significant positive effects in relation to health and well-being; housing; and economy and employment. Minor positive effects are reported in relation to climate change and cultural heritage (although, in the case of the latter, minor negative effects are also reported as well). Minor negative effects are reported in relation to water; and moderate negative effects in relation to landscape and land. Mixed effects are reported in relation to transport and travel i.e. significant positive effects in relation to the focusing of development in strategic locations and minor negative effects in relation to potential congestion on nearby routes. Uncertain negative effects are recorded in relation to biodiversity and minerals. Where significant effects are identified, measures to mitigate these have been suggested, if possible. Further measures to enhance the positive effects have also been suggested, where possible.

- 6.2 The SA reports that the findings broadly support the preferred strategy as it would generate the most benefits in terms of employment and housing growth. It reports that the focus of growth at key areas of economic growth and infrastructure capacity is also likely to reduce the length of car trips, and encourage sustainable modes of travel (particularly where there are strong rail and bus links into the City of Leicester). It also states that, in terms of environmental effects, the preferred approach does not generate any major negative effects and performs better or the same as the alternatives in this respect.
- 6.3 The SA acknowledges the role of the SGP in establishing broad preferred locations for longer term growth to provide a framework for statutory Local Plans. It states that the broad locations would evidently be able to accommodate a range of different growth levels so, if subsequent work based on updated evidence confirms that a higher level of growth ought to be pursued in certain locations, then this can be considered at that stage. A higher level of growth (than the notional projected housing requirement) will have largely negative impacts. This is supported by the SA findings which suggest that the negative effects for every option would be likely to increase and this could lead to major negative effects on the built and natural environment, water and transport infrastructure.