

Subject:
Update on the Evidence Base for the Core Strategy

Status: For Publication

Report to: Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 February 2010

Report of: Forward Planning

Portfolio

Holder: Regeneration

Key Decision: Yes / No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the progress of the studies being undertaken to inform the Core Strategy.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:-

- Delivering quality Services to our customers
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
- Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
- Promoting the Borough
- Providing value for money services

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1 The **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (Level 1) has been finalised and is available to inform the Core Strategy about general locations where development might be considered acceptable in terms of flood risk. However, the Council will need to undertake a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment when it comes to undertaking the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The Forward Planning team worked with the
- 4.2 The **Retail and Town Centre Study** has been finalised and has informed the emerging policies set out in the *Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward*. Boundaries for town centres have been drawn up and these were consulted upon in the Core Strategy consultation undertaken in November / December 2009. Similarly a retail hierarchy was established, which was used to inform the emerging retail policies in *The Proposed Way Forward* document.
- 4.3 The **Employment Land Study** is almost nearing completion. The amount of employment land needed to meet the Borough's needs over the plan period to 2017 (20.84 ha) was established early in the study and this informed the Employment Land policies. The consultants are now assessing the portfolio of sites to suggest which should be allocated to meet Rossendale's anticipated need for employment land. It is expected that the study should be finalised within the next month. The Regeneration team has assisted with steering this study.
- 4.4 The **Wind Energy in the Landscape Study** has been undertaken for a consortium of South Pennine authorities led by Rossendale. It identifies the landscape sensitivity of all parts of the study area and the capacity to accommodate wind energy developments. The Final Report was received in February 2010.
- 4.5 The **Renewable Energy Potential Study** is again being prepared for a consortium of South Pennine authorities, this time led by Pendle. It will examine the potential for different types of renewable energy within each Borough and is due to report in April.
- 4.6 A **Tourism Study** looking at the potential economic benefits of tourism is in the process of being arranged. Forward Planning is working with colleagues in Regeneration and Communities to appoint a consultant and provide a steer to their work. It is intended that this study will start in the next two weeks and be completed by late April.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 Any financial implications are contained within existing budget resources.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 No legal comments.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

7.1 No HR comments

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Generally the studies are in the final stages and will be ready to be published on the Council's website shortly. It is not expected that any more studies will need to be commissioned from outside consultants, unless we are advised to as the Core Strategy progresses (eg from Government Office for the North West) or directed to by the Planning Inspectorate. Any further information can be obtained from Anne Storah or in terms of the wind energy and renewable energy studies from Adrian Smith, both from the Forward Planning section

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 That Members note the information.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Consultation has been carried out on several of the studies as part of the *Core Strategy: The Proposed Way Forward* consultation undertaken in November / December 2009. Consultation with stakeholders has also been included as part of most of the studies (e.g. the consultants spoke to property agents, and economic development and business organisations active in the area as part of the Employment Land Study.

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required Yes / **No**

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached Yes / **No**

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes / **No**

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached Yes / **No**

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Either

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1) Retail and Town Centre Study Employment Land Study	Forward Planning offices / www.rossendalebc.gov.uk <i>For all other studies please contact Anne Storah or Adrian Smith</i>